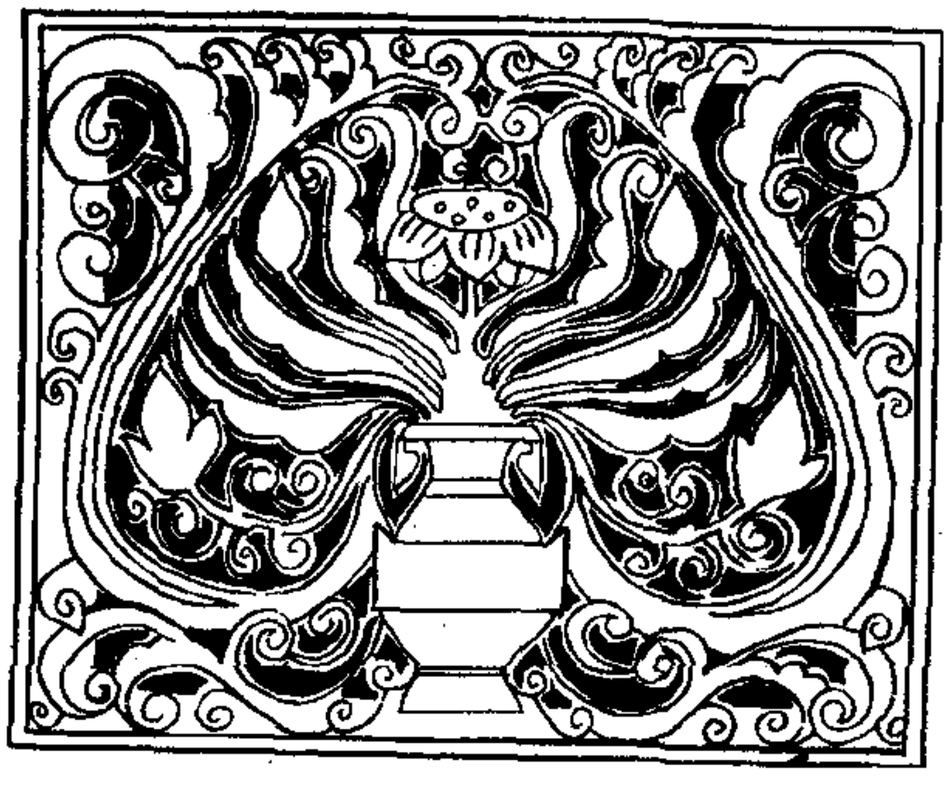

PRABUDDHA BHARATA

A Monthly Journal of the
Ramakrishna Order
Started by Swami Vivekananda in 1896

Editorial Office
P.O. Mayavati, Via Lohaghat
Dt. Pithoragarh 262 524, U.P.

Publication Office
5 Dehi Entally Road
Calcutta 700 014

Phone (91)(33)244 0898
(91)(33)245 2383
Fax (91)(33)245 0050

Rates of Subscription
(inclusive of postage)

	Annual	Life *(30 Years)*
India	**Rs. 45**	**Rs. 500**
Sri Lanka & Bangladesh	**Rs. 120**	**Rs. 2000**
U.S.A. & Canada *Air Mail*	**$ 20**	**$ 300**
Other Countries *Air Mail*	**£ 15**	**£ 225**

Cover: *A view of the Himalayas from Nepal*

FEBRUARY 1996

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उत्तिष्ठत
जाग्रत
प्राप्य
वरान्निबोधत

PRABUDDHA BHARATA

ARISE! AWAKE! AND STOP NOT TILL THE GOAL IS REACHED.

Vol. 101 FEBRUARY No. 2

Divine Wisdom

HOLY COMPANY

इन्द्रियार्थेषु सज्जन्त्या प्रसङ्गस्त्वयि मे कृतः ।
अजानन्त्या परं भावं तथाप्यस्त्वभयाय मे ॥

Owing to my hankering after the life of the senses and without realizing that you are a knower of the Atman, I associated with you. Yet even that association at the sensual level will be a blessing to me.

सङ्गो यः संसृतेर्हेतुरसत्सु विहितोऽधिया ।
स एव साधुषु कृतो निःसङ्गत्वाय कल्पते ॥

The association we seek in ignorance with worldly-minded men leads to bondage in Samsara. But the same association, if it is with holy men, leads to the development of non-attachment.

नेह यत्कर्म धर्माय न विरागाय कल्पते ।
न तीर्थपदसेवायै दीवन्नपि मृतो हि सः ॥

If one's actions in the world do not lead to a life according to Dharma, if one's observance of Dharma does not lead to dispassion, and if one's dispassion does not lead to the service of the Lord—that person is equal to a dead man though living.

साहं भगवतो नूनं वञ्चिता मायया दृढम् ।
यत्त्वां विमुक्तिदं प्राप्य न मुमुक्षेय बन्धनात् ॥

I have, indeed, been deceived by the Lord's Maya! Woe unto me that having come to be associated with one capable of giving liberation from Samsara, I did not take advantage of the opportunity!

—*Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam*, 3.23.54–7

Knowledge is Power

We are in the midst of a knowledge revolution, rather an *information* revolution. An amazing technological tool, the computer, increasingly versatile and powerful, and easily available has made this possible. A computer, a tap, a mouse and a click—almost any desired information just about anything presents itself on the screen, like Alladdin's genie. The near-instantaneous dissemination of knowledge through computer-network communication, as through a neural network, has set the world astir.

There are three remarkable features of this ferment: breath-taking acceleration in scientific studies and discoveries, and development of new technologies; universal access to knowledge; and transformation of knowledge into a crucial commodity. Together these three have endowed knowledge with a special, heretofore unknown temporal power.

The first is obvious. With a now familiar regularity mass media report one or another scientific breakthrough or technological innovation. As for the second feature, viz. the doors of knowledge being open to all, never before have so many felt stimulated to know more, and at the same time found it possible to satisfy that urge as a matter of human right, so to say, with a computer. Thanks to the fascinating power of the computer to fire imagination, just anyone is able to draw from an inexhaustible pool of knowledge—for earning better by honing one's professional knowledge; for mind-culture; out of curiosity; for entertainment; or, sometimes, with leisure hanging heavily, simply to get lost in the information-maze.

It is this second feature that, quite unexpectedly, has given birth to the third, turning knowledge into a packaged vital and powerful commodity. So, the quondam implications of *Knowledge is Power* is now lost. Since knowledge conferred power, a knowledge-seeker was considered eligible to receive it only if close tests confirmed that he possessed noble character. Knowledge used to imply, rather demand, power first and foremost over oneself, next over things. The first functioned like a regulator, a check valve, a filter. Knowledge thus was considered a precious acquisition—to be tended, shared and broadcast for the common good. Now that power has become synonymous with power over everything except oneself. For example, the knowledge that the juice of a particular herb cures fever is a power—to cure, to serve others, and also to earn a fee for a living. Now, if this *knower* here has no control over himself, his power turns into a power over others, a weapon against others—to deny treatment, to harass, to overcharge, and so on. Hardly ever was knowledge misused this way. Neither was it ever for trade.

But with nations racing to prosper and dominate, knowledge has found selfish uses. More and better organized knowledge means its more productive application, improved technology and manufacture, *more trade, and more money. Money is* power. Thus knowledge is power. Knowledge has been re-discovered to be basic to prosperity. With the consequent intensification and outspread of informa-

tion-hunger for individual, institutional and national development, knowledge is a carrot and a stick in the hands of those who possess it. 'Have knowledge, will dictate' was never truer than it is today.

Knowledge is now an economic power and therefore political power for domination. It is a merchandise—to be produced, packaged, used and sold. Hence the copyrighting. Hence the unwillingness to share all knowledge. Hence also the device of selling dated knowledge.

Knowledge, then, as a universally needed ware is a profit-generating tool and a camouflaged threat. Anyone best equipped to generate and handle new knowledge can by manipulating its flow help, retard or destroy the development of OTHERS. The nature of perception, the knowledge, of 'others' and of 'I' is what has currently made knowledge so dangerous. The 'other' is no doubt a fact of life. But today's pronounced individualism, drive for success and riches, economic disparity, racial tensions, and hardening minority identities have isolated the 'other' as an opponent, a competitor, a usable resource, or a market.

This narrow relationship with the 'other' has stifled the beneficial power of knowledge. We have created a truncated 'other', and now find that that is limiting knowledge's special ability to dispel ignorance and remove misery. The persistence of that 'other' as entirely different from and in opposition to oneself can make knowledge a further menace—first to others, then to oneself, like Aladdin's genie, portending destruction.

The knowledge revolution, which began on an extremely promising note, is passing through a hazardous phase. Knowledge as a progressive power to unravel the mysteries of the universe, and as a universally accessible powerhouse to be drawn from for better living, intellectual illumination and joy, i.e. as a liberating force, is now suffering a set back. It is now a hostage in the hands of nationalism, individualism and greed. What can prevent it from being used destructively is a further advance in knowledge that succeeds in redefining the 'I' and the 'other'. It should help us move from the 'I' ('we', 'us') *versus* 'other' ('that', 'them') stage to the 'I' *and* the 'other' stage.

There are already some promising signs: international review of our relationship with the environment, respect for pluralism, genetic studies tracing our common ancestry, and religious revival. These are likely to make the knowledge that 'I' and the 'other' are limbs of a single organism central to all other forms of knowledge. Thus, once the 'I'-'other' opposition is resolved, knowledge will, hopefully, cease to be a power employed predominantly for commerce and subjugation. For, awareness of organic unity and interdependence, like the awareness in a good team-player, has a humbling effect; it displaces individualism and egotism without smothering individuality, individual speciality. In fact, only that is worthy of being called knowledge which gives us this 'team-player' humility (not the sheepish type); which makes us competitive, non-exploitative and pluralistic. All that goes these days as knowledge in its phase as a selfish temporal power is mere information. One can even go further and say that most of the millions participating in the knowledge revolution are really handling only well classified data, information packages; they are imbibing virtual knowledge, without getting any wiser.

A better way of looking at knowledge is: Unifying knowledge is wisdom; com-

partmentalized knowledge is mere information—mere sheafs of notes yet to be made into a book. Organized information and its use is science. The integrated (symphonized?) sciences and their use is wisdom: the ability to first and always see just any thing or person (including oneself) or event as being in an interactive, and interdependent, living relationship with the rest of existence. And it is towards this that knowledge seems to be moving.

When it achieves maximum integration of all information, knowledge would have come full circle. Rather our estimation of knowledge would have come full circle. Knowledge shall then continue to be a power, but a power to illumine, unite and make us wise.

Is knowledge moving on its own towards its destination, or are we to make that happen? Both are true. On the one hand, we should seek and extend our knowledge. On the other hand, knowledge appears to be drawing us to discover her true power. Our constitution is such that we can't help wanting to know more; and we are also impelled to make sense of *all* that we know. Taking both together, knowledge can be said to be like a boat in a river. We are in a knowledge-boat on one of the rivers of existence, viz. the human. The boat is any way going to move, the river will make it move towards the ocean, which is the source and the re-unifier of all the rivers, of all forms of life. Our contribution to the movement is to steer the boat towards the ocean. And the most important part of the steering is never to get stuck in the muddy banks of worldliness. Once we reach the ocean, the experience is vastly different from that while on the river. The boatman who has seen the ocean bears a different expression on his face and in his eyes. His understanding of the river, the uses of a boat and the ocean is qualitatively superior to that of an upstream boatman. When our knowledge attains its end, unifying the knowledge of the details of creation, we shall marvel at the true scope of knowledge.

Let us steer our knowledge-boats to the ocean, staying clear of the muddy banks of commerce, domination and greed, and complete the knowledge revolution. ❐

The bodhisattva should adopt the same attitude toward all beings, his mind should be even toward all beings, he should not handle others with an uneven mind, but with a mind which is friendly, well-disposed, helpful, free from aversions, avoiding harm and hurt; he should handle others as if they were his mother, father, son or daughter. As a saviour of all beings should a bodhisattva behave toward all beings. So should he train himself if he wants to know full enlightenment.

—*Buddhism,* Perfection of Wisdom
in Eight Thousand Lines, 321–2

Nations of the Third Byte*

ALVIN TOFFLER and HEIDI TOFFLER

The rise of data based economics has trisected the world's old vision into North and South.

It can rightly be asked why the United States does not seem to know where it is going. US foreign and military policy is swerving like a drunken driver without a map. It shows no clear grasp of vital shortterm national interests, let alone of the longterm shape of the global system.

The old world map is obsolete. It is undergoing the deepest rearrangement of global power since the birth of industrial civilization.

Until recently world power was bisected. There were the industrial societies on top and the peasant based societies at the bottom. But the rising importance of goods and services based on sophisticated knowledge and high technology, from computer software and news services to genetically enhanced seeds, has created a third layer. This layer is composed of a group of societies that increasingly do the world's economically relevant 'knowledge work'.

This transition is not yet clear, largely because nowhere is it complete. Even Japan and the US, whose economies are the most technically advanced, still have large smokestack sectors where low skill labour prevails.

China, Brazil and India, mainly agrarian, have large industrial economies with pockets of high technology. But these overlaps should not blind us to the powerful forces that are shaping the global system of the next century.

As global competition drives the advanced economies deeper into highly skilled, information intensive production and distribution, they transfer more and more of their unskilled muscle based jobs to agrarian countries like China or, for that matter, Mexico.

Nations like Japan, the US and Singapore are neither agrarian nor industrial. Their workforces are predominantly white collar. Their societies are media drenched. Their economies rely on complex electronic infrastructures.

Information is the most basic raw material of tomorrow's economy. It is to the emerging high technology nations what roads and ports were to the emerging industrial nations.

But nations as such are becoming less important. Powerful transnational businesses are creating information networks that 'bypass the nation state framework', to use the words of Mr. Riccardo Petrella, director of science and technology forecasting for the European Union.

Regions are also growing in power. Mr. Petrella, for example, believes, 'By the middle of the next century such nation states as Germany, Italy, US or Japan will no longer be the most relevant sociological entities

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* *The New York Times;* by arrangement with *The Telegraph,* Calcutta.

and the ultimate political configurations. Instead areas like Orange County in California, Osaka in Japan, the Lyon region of France or Germany's Ruhr district will acquire predominant socio-economic status.'

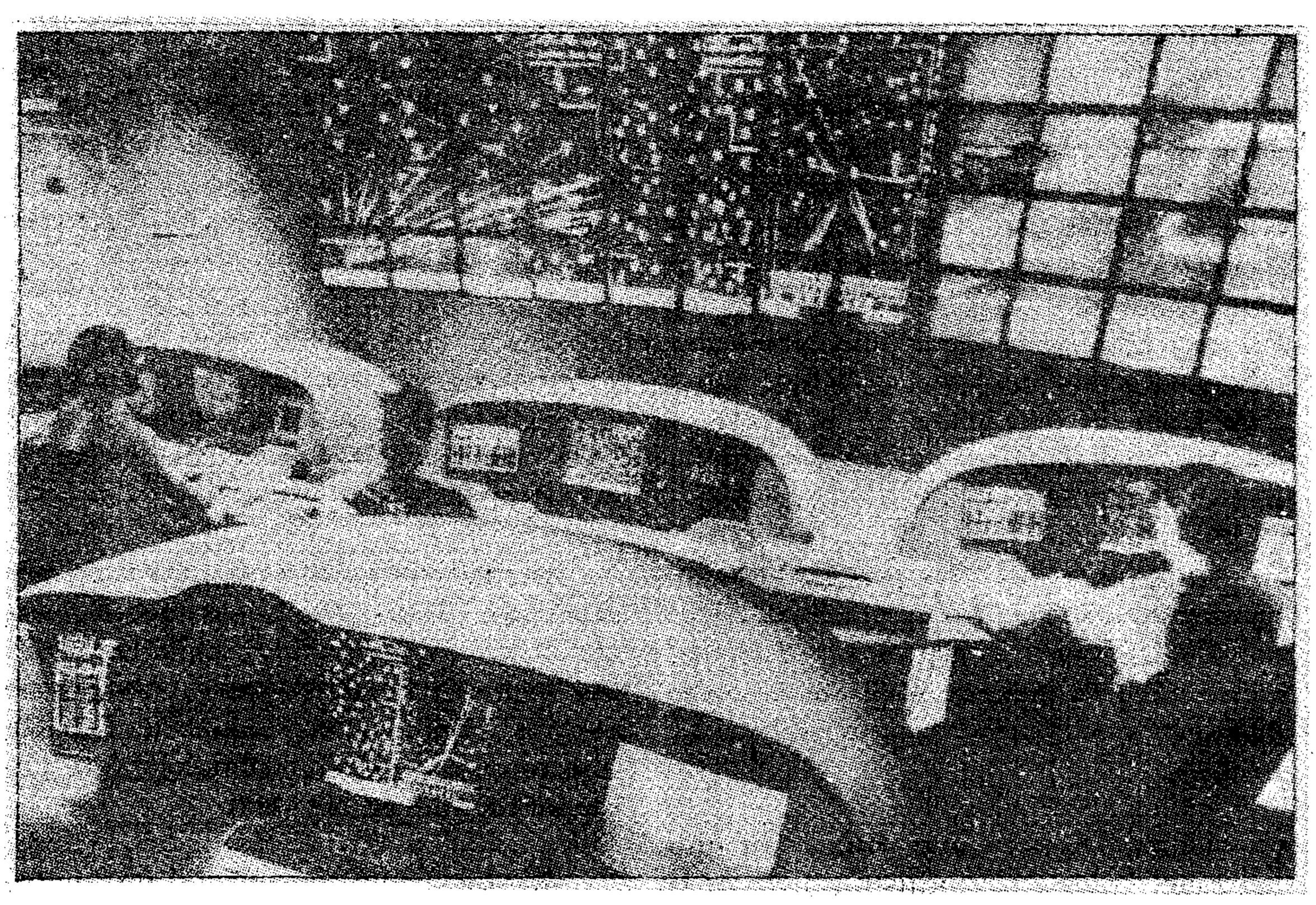
In his opinion the 'real decision making powers of the future...will be transnational companies in alliance with city regional governments.'

Another type of unit is also growing in importance. Thousands of transnational organizations—the Green-peace Foundation for example—are springing up like mushrooms to form a new 'civil society'.

Besides these components of the new global system can be added the world religions like Roman Catholicism and Islam, plus growing media networks like the Cable News Network that cross and blur borders. Put these together and it is clear the world system built around neatly defined nation states is being replaced by a kind of global computer.

At one level are the agrarian countries. They are hardly connected to the system. They have few links to the outside world and operate at a leisurely 'clock speed'.

At a second level are the industrial nations. They move faster and are more con-



Micro chips of the old blocs

nected to the global system. But what we call 'third wave' societies—with economies based on information, communications and technology—run at hyper-speeds. And they require an amazing number of connections with the outside world.

In 1930 the US was a party to only 34 treaties or agreements with other countries. Today with the world's most knowledge intensive economy it is party to more than a 1,000 treaties and tens of thousands of agreements.

This produces an overlooked paradox. A very strange world in which the most powerful and most accelerated countries are the least free to act independently.

The widening differences in the trisected global system also change each nation's list of vital interests. For 'first wave' or agricultural economies the essentials for survival are land, energy, water for irrigation, cooking oil, food, minimal literacy and markets for cash crops or raw materials. Their natural resources and farm products are their chief salable assets.

Nation states in the second wave or industrial tier still rely on cheap manual labour and mass production with concentrated, integrated national economies. They need high inputs of energy per unit of production. They need bulk raw materials to keep their factories going—iron, steel, timber and petrochemicals.

They serve as homes to a small number of global corporations. They are major producers of pollution. Above all they need export markets for their products.

Third wave economies are the newest tier of global system. They have vital interests sharply different from the other two types of economies. Unlike agrarian states they have no great need for additional territory. Unlike industrial states they have little need for vast natural resources of their own. Japan and Singapore demonstrate this.

These societies still need energy and food of course. But they also need knowledge convertible into wealth. They need access to, or control of, world data banks and telecommunication networks. They need markets for products and services that depend on knowledge. Financial services, management consulting, software, banking and economic intelligence are the type of sectors they are interested in.

They need protection against the piracy of intellectual products. As for ecology, they want the 'unspoiled' agrarian countries to protect their jungles, skies and greenery for the 'global good'. Sometimes even if it stifles the development of these agricultural nations.

When all these changes are taken together what is achieved is a transformation more revolutionary than anything caused by the Cold War's end.

It is an emerging world in which great powers may decline, tiny states may become shooting stars, non-states dominate many decisions and advanced technologies, and weaponry may turn up in the remotest corners of the planet.

This is the arena in which tomorrow's wars—and the efforts to stop those wars—will be fought.

Like those of many other countries, Washington's policy will continue to swerve drunkenly across the globe until its business and political leaders study this road map of tomorrow and develop long range strategies to advance the US's truly vital interests in a trisected planet. ❐

Madhusudana Saraswati on the Bhagavad-Gita

SWAMI GAMBHIRANANDA

(Continued from the Dec. '95 issue)

PRECEPT AND PRACTICE

(Arjuna:) 'Even if I undertake work, why will people imitate this?'

Anticipating this doubt He says, '(They will imitate that conduct) since they follow the behaviour of great persons':

यद्यदाचरति श्रेष्ठस्तत्तदेवेतरो जनः ।
स यत्प्रमाणं कुरुते लोकस्तदनुवर्तते ॥

Yadyadācarati śreṣṭhas-
tattadevetaro janaḥ;
Sa yatpramāṇaṁ kurute
lokastadanuvartate. (3.21)

Whatever a superior person does, another does that very thing! Whatever he upholds as authority, an ordinary person follows that.

Yat yat, whatever action, whether good or bad; *śreṣṭhaḥ,* a superior person, an eminent person, such as a king; *ācarati,* does; *itaraḥ,* another; *janaḥ,* person, an ordinary person who is his follower; does *tat tat eva,* that very thing—but not something else independently. This is the meaning.

(Arjuna:) Keeping the (injunctions of) scriptures in view and giving up the practices of eminent persons that are not sanctioned by the scriptures, why does not a person undertake only actions prescribed by the scriptures?

Anticipating such a doubt, He shows that others follow the eminent persons even in matters of understanding as in matters of conduct: *Yat,* whatever, whether Vedic or mundane; *saḥ,* he, the superior person; *pramāṇam kurute,* upholds as authority, accepts as authoritative; *lokaḥ,* the ordinary person also; *anuvartate,* follows, upholds as authority; *tat,* that itself—but (he does) not (accept) anything independently. This is the purport.

'This being so, actions must be undertaken by you, who are an eminent prince, for making people undertake their duties and preventing them from taking the wrong path. For the rule is that, people's actions correspond to those of the eminent ones.' This is the import.

He (the Lord) says, in three verses, 'In this matter I Myself am an example':

न मे पार्थास्ति कर्तव्यं त्रिषु लोकेषु किंचन ।
नानवाप्तमवाप्तव्यं वर्त एव च कर्मणि ॥

Na me parthāsti kartavyaṁ
triṣu lokeṣu kiṁcana;
Nānavāptamavāptavyaṁ
varta eva ca karmaṇi. (3.22)

In all the three worlds, O Pārtha, there is no duty whatsoever for Me (to fulfil); there is nothing unachieved that has to be achieved. (Still) I am engaged in works.

O Pārtha, *triṣu,* even in all the three; *lokeṣu,* worlds; *na asti,* there is no; *kartavyam,* duty; *kiṁcana,* whatsoever; *me,* for Me (to fulfil); because *na,* there is no; *anavāptam,* unachieved result whatsoever; *avāptavyam,*

that has to be achieved by Me. Still, *varte eva,* I am engaged; *karmaṇi,* in action; i.e., I do perform work. By addressing him (Arjuna) as 'Pārtha', He points out this: You who, being born in a very pure Kṣatriya family, and being the grandson of Śūra (a Yādava prince), are very much like Me, should behave like Me.

(Arjuna:) Even making people undertake their duties and preventing them from taking the wrong path is not Your duty, because it is fruitless.

Anticipating this He says:

यदि ह्यहं न वर्तेयं जातु कर्मण्यतन्द्रितः ।
मम वर्त्मानुवर्तन्ते मनुष्याः पार्थ सर्वशः ॥

Yadi hyaham na varteyam
jātu karmaṇyatandritaḥ;
Mama vartmānuvartante
manuṣyāḥ pārtha sarvaśaḥ. (3.23)

For, O Pārtha, if at any time I do not continue vigilantly in action, men will follow My path in every way.

O Pārtha, *yadi,* if, again; *jātu,* at any time; *aham,* I; *na varteyam,* do not continue; *atandritaḥ,* vigilantly, tirelessly; *karmaṇi,* in action—if I do not perform actions—; then, *manuṣyāḥ,* men; who are fit for action; *anuvartante,* will follow; *sarvaśaḥ,* in every way; *vartma,* the path; *mama,* of Mine, who am pre-eminent.

(Arjuna:) It is but proper that people should follow the path of Yours who are pre-eminent. What is the harm if they follow?

Hence, to this He says:

उत्सीदेयुरिमे लोका न कुर्यां कर्म चेदहम् ।
सङ्करस्य च कर्ता स्यामुपहन्यामिमाः प्रजाः ॥

Utsīdeyurime lokā
na kuryāṁ karma cedaham;
Saṅkarasya ca kartā syām-
upahanyāmimāḥ prajāḥ. (3.24)

These worlds will be ruined if I do not perform action. I shall become the agent of the intermingling (of castes), and shall be destroying these beings.

Cet, if; *aham,* I, the Lord; *na kuryām,* do not perform; *karma,* action; then, since actions by Manu and others, who are My followers, do not arise, *ime lokāḥ,* these worlds; *utsīdeyuḥ,* will be ruined, as a result of the destruction of the duties—which are the cause of the continuity of the world; *ca,* and; as a consequence, *syām,* I Myself shall become; *kartā,* the agent; *saṅkarasya,* of the intermingling of castes. And by that, I Myself *upa-hanyām,* shall be destroying; all *imāḥ,* these; *prajāḥ,* beings; I shall be bringing about destruction through the annulment of righteousness. How, again, can I, the Lord, who am engaged in promoting the welfare of creatures destroy them all? This is the idea.

Another interpretation of the verses beginning with 'Whatever a superior person does,' etc. (21) is this: It is not that you ought to perform (your duty) merely with a view to making people undertake their duties and preventing them from taking the wrong path, but also because of its being the conduct of eminent people. Thus, the kind of conduct that I who am pre-eminent have, that very kind of conduct should be pursued by you who are My follower; but not any other, independently. This is the meaning.

(Arjuna:) Of what kind is Your conduct which has to be followed by me?

In answer to such a question, that (conduct) has been revealed through the three verses beginning with 'In all the three worlds, O Pārtha,' etc.

(Arjuna:) Is it not that there is no harm whatever to You, the Lord, even while engaged in *loka-saṅgraha,* because You have no idea of agentship? But in my case, who am a human being, Knowledge will become overpowered because of the idea of agentship while I am engaged in *loka-saṅgraha.*

Hence He says:

सक्ताः कर्मण्यविद्वांसो यथा कुर्वन्ति भारत ।
कुर्याद्विद्वांस्तथाऽसक्तश्चिकीर्षुर्लोकसंग्रहम् ॥

Saktāḥ karmaṇyavidvāṁso
yathā kurvanti bhārata;
Kuryādvidvāṁstathā'saktaś-
cikīrṣurlokasaṅgraham. (3.25)

O scion of the Bharata dynasty, as the unenlightened people perform (their duties) with attachment to work, so should the enlightened person act, without attachment, being desirous of loka-saṅgraha.

Yathā, as; *avidvāṁsaḥ,* the unenlightened people, the ignorant; *kurvanti,* undertake actions; *saktāḥ karmaṇi,* with attachment to, becoming engrossed in, work, with the idea of agentship and the desire for results; *tathā,* so, indeed; even the *vidvān,* enlightened person, the knower of the Self; *kuryāt,* should act, with a desire for *(cikīrṣuḥ) loka-saṅgraha;* but *asaktaḥ,* remaining unattached, i.e., without having the idea of agentship and the desire for (selfish) results. By addressing him (Arjuna) as 'Bhārata' He (the Lord) points out, 'You, being a scion of the race of Bharata—or, being devoted *(rata)* to Knowledge *(bhā)*—, are capable of understanding the purport of the scriptures as has been taught.'

(Arjuna:) What is the reason that *loka-saṅgraha* has to be achieved only through the performance of action but not through imparting *tattva-jñāna* (Knowledge of Reality)?

Hence He says:

न बुद्धिभेदं जनयेदज्ञानां कर्मसङ्गिनाम् ।
जोषयेत्सर्वकर्माणि विद्वान्युक्तः समाचरन् ॥

Na buddhibhedam janayed-
ajñānām karmasaṅginām;
Joṣayetsarvakarmāṇi
vidvānyuktaḥ samācaran. (3.26)

One should not create any disturbance in the beliefs of the ignorant, who are attached to work. While himself remaining alert the enlightened person should, by duly performing all the duties, make them do these.

By instructing about the Self, which is not an agent, one should not create *(janayet)* any disturbance *(bheda)* in the beliefs *(buddhi)*—'I shall perform this work and I shall enjoy its fruit—, *ajñānām,* of the ignorant, of the non-discriminating ones; *karma-saṅginām,* who are attached to work, who are engrossed in work, with the idea of agentship and desire for result. But, *yuktaḥ,* while himself remaining alert; *vidvān,* the enlightened person, desirous of *loka-saṅgraha; joṣayet,* should make them do these (duties) with joy; by rousing their faith, *samācaran,* by duly performing (himself); *sarva-karmāṇi,* all the duties for which the unenlightened people are eligible. If the beliefs of the ineligible persons are disturbed by instructing them, then since faith in work will cease and Knowledge will not arise, therefore the result will be their becoming deprived of both. So has it been said,

> If one speaks of Brahman being everything to an ignorant person or to a half-awakened person, then that person will be thrown into a great chain of hells by him.[1]

(to be continued)

1. *L. Y. Vā., Dāsurākhyāna,* 17.27.

Swami Vivekananda, The Mystic

SWAMI TATHAGATANANDA

A mystic is someone who has the direct experience of God, as distinguished from the religious person, who believes there is a God, and perhaps has faith in Him, but has not seen, heard, or touched Him. Swami Vivekananda was a mystic of the highest order, having experienced God in many ways. A number of his mystic experiences are described in this article by Swami Tathagatananda, spiritual leader of the Vedanta Society of New York City.

The advancement of science and technology, the uncertainty about the goal of life, the craving for sensuous enjoyment, and the lack of spiritual vision have made modern people restless, insecure and prone to mental depression. The complexity of modern life, a deep-rooted hidden horror of being confined to the abhorred ego—our insulated puny self—has made cynics out of us. We are alienated from our spiritual heritage, from nature, and from ourselves. A philosophy that interprets and understands the universe as soulless—a mere machine made of matter, governed by natural laws having no spiritual element behind, cannot be accepted as a sane philosophy. Science and technology too have cast their own spell over our mind; disbelief has its own terrible fascination, glamour of worldly life its own enchantment.

But where is happiness? Fear, hopelessness, and insecurity have gripped our minds. Tragic sense of futility in the midst of plenty finds an eloquent expression in the writings of Bertrand Russell, who was a spokesman for our materialistic age. Russell said:

> Brief and powerless is Man's life; on him and all his race the slow, sure doom falls pitiless and dark. Blind to good and evil, reckless of destruction, omnipotent matter rolls on its relentless way for Man, condemned today to lose his dearest, tomorrow himself to pass through the gate of darkness, it remains only to cherish, ere yet the blow falls, the lofty thoughts that ennoble his little day; disdaining the coward terrors of the slave of Fate, to worship at the shrine that his own hands have built; undismayed by the empire of chance, to preserve a mind free from the wanton tyranny that rules his outward life; proudly defiant of the irresistible forces that tolerate, for a moment, his knowledge and his condemnation, to sustain alone, a weary but unyielding Atlas, the world that his own ideals have fashioned despite the trampling march of unconscious power.[1]

But there are people who refuse to accept this mood of depression, belief in an inexorable fate of doom. The desire to believe and hope is innate in the human breast and the tendency to self-enquiry will not be suppressed. All through human history we find people's deep and abiding faith in God—faith in the supreme creative Power working in and behind the universe, who manifests Himself (or Herself) as the infinite energy in Nature, as the vitality in all life, and as the moral conscience in

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1. 'A Free Man's Worship', quoted in *Mysticism and Logic*, pp. 56–7.

human beings. This God, or impersonal Power, is intuitively believed by us to be the Source of truth, beauty and order in the universe, and Who brings prosperity as well as spiritual growth to humanity.

To search for the hidden meaning of life is natural in us. As Plato said,

> Man is declared to be that creature who is constantly in search of himself, a creature who at every moment of his existence must examine and scrutinize the condition of his existence. He is a being in search of meaning.

Along with an urge for self-assertion, an urge to self-transcendence is common with us.

In our desperate struggle to attain spiritual freedom we need a living faith. Authentic mystics can implant faith in us through the power of their illumined lives. They are the greatest benefactors of humanity. Arnold Toynbee expresses this view in his *Civilization on Trial.* Fear imprisons, paralyzes and disheartens us, but a living faith liberates and inspires us. The seers of spiritual truth, the mystics alone have the power to create in us that deep faith in transcendental truth, bestow incorporeal bliss and happiness on us, and help transform our consciousness now steeped in fear, doubt and hopelessness.

Mysticism should not be equated with mysteriousness, or with mystery-mongering, or with misty, foggy or vague occultism. Mysticism is essentially a spiritual discipline and therefore moral in its character; it is the seeking by direct perception of God, who is inside and outside of all living beings. There is no contradiction between rationalism and mysticism. Only in the beginning of the search for Truth, intellect and reason dominate; later reason becomes implicit and is transcended. In mysticism the perception of God is immediate and spontaneous, so where is the need for reason? Mystical experience is gained in meditation—after reason has finished—in a flash, as it were, 'unannounced and unheralded'. The mystic ultimately gets the vision that the whole Universe is within himself; he is a microcosm and is one with the macrocosm.

Genuine mystics always sternly disapprove of sentimentality or emotionalism which condescends to seek for occult powers, name and fame, and fails to pursue the highest goal of truth in life. Indian mystics condemn miraculous powers as hindrances and obstacles to the realization of truth and union with God. With all, from Patanjali the father of Yoga-philosophy to Sri Ramakrishna, this attitude is to be found. Ramakrishna's attitude is well known on this point: True mystical experience or mystical consciousness gives us an integrated thought, the comprehension of the meaningful whole. It is the outcome of the realization of truth and rises from the depth of a pure heart. Evelyn Underhill also wrote: 'Mysticism is the art of union with reality. The mystic is a person who has attained that union in a greater or lesser degree; or who aims at and believes in such attainment.'[2] Russell wants to include many thinkers

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2. Evelyn Underhill, *Practical Mysticism*, p. 3.

genuinely devoted to philosophy, who have an inkling of an intellectual comprehension of truth.[3]

Swami Vivekananda, A Peerless Mystic

Swami Vivekananda was a mystic par excellence who experienced *nirvikalpa samādhi,* all-transcending absorption in meditation. In this state of overwhelming grace and beatitude the experience is of spiritual Oneness of all things. The consciousness of duality is completely absent and the individual finds himself merged in the universal Self and enjoys undifferentiated Bliss. The true mystic is very rare. To quote Vivekananda's own words, we find in this world 'a small group of men who teach religion from experience. They are called mystics, and mystics in every religion speak the same tongue and teach the same truth. This is the real science of religion.'[4]

From our modern cynicism and insecurity Swami Vivekananda, a modern mystic, can redeem us. Humanity is sure to get an insight into a living faith, a meaningful way of living, and the assurance of supreme enlightenment from examining his life and teachings. The mystic Vivekananda opens a new vista of saving wisdom for anxiety-stricken people of the modern world. Through his spiritual experience he saw only the *divine* in the world of matter. So in his famous lecture on 'God in Everything', delivered in London in 1896 he said:

> The whole world is full of the Lord. Open your eyes and see Him. This is what Vedanta teaches. Give up the world which you have conjectured, because your conjecture was based upon a very partial experience, upon very poor reasoning, and upon your own weakness. Give it up; the world we have been thinking of so long, the world to which we have been clinging so long, is a false world of our own creation. Give that up; open your eyes and see that *as such* it never existed; it was dream, *Māyā.* What existed was the Lord Himself. It is He who is in the child, in the wife, and in the husband; it is He who is in the good and in the bad; He is in the sin and in the sinner; He is in life and in death.[5]

In this short essay we shall study various mystical experiences of Swamiji. In his enlightened vision the objective world was transfigured in such a manner that he actually saw divinity alone in and through the world of matter. His great life, experiences and teachings may help remove the cobwebs of our ignorance.

Early Mystical Experiences

Swamiji was an adept in meditation. Sri Ramakrishna used to say of him that he was a *dhyān-siddha* from his very birth. That is, he was a perfected soul from his previous existence and he was born in this life already perfect in meditation. As a four or five year old child, Narendranath (that was his given name) was once found motionless in deep meditation. On another occasion he was meditating, or rather keeping himself engaged in this 'pastime' along with a few friends. Noticing a cobra which had entered the room, the other little boys naturally took to their heels, but even their loud shouts could not disturb Naren in his concentration of mind. The snake suddenly glided away. Later, on enquiry Naren said, 'I knew nothing of the snake or of anything else; I was feeling inexpressible bliss.' Nor was this all. Every night he used to fall asleep in a strange manner. No sooner had he closed his eyes than he saw between his eyebrows 'a

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3. *Mysticism and Logic,* p. 3.
4. *The Complete Works of Swami Vivekananda* (Calcutta: Advaita Ashrama, 1989), vol. 6, p. 81. [Hereafter: C.W.]
5. C.W., vol. 2, pp. 146–7.

wonderful spot of light of changing hues, which would expand and burst and bathe his whole body in a flood of white radiance. As his mind became preoccupied with this phenomenon, his body would fall asleep. It was a daily occurrence which he would court by lying down on his chest; as soon as drowsiness overtook him, the light appeared.'[6] The boy's wonderful simplicity was revealed when he recounted this experience; he took it for granted that it was natural with everyone! In later years, Sri Ramakrishna asked him about it. 'Naren, my boy, do you see light when you go to sleep?'

This natural experience continued throughout his life in some form or other. Sister Nivedita has given us the following information:

> In later life, he would often mention this question and digress, to describe the light he saw. Sometimes it would come as a ball, which a boy was kicking towards him. It would draw nearer. He would become one with it, and all would be forgotten. Sometimes it was a blaze, into which he would enter.[7]

Nivedita has also written: 'When he was only eight years old, sitting at play, he had developed the power of entering into samadhi.'[8] In later years Swamiji told his English disciple E.T. Sturdy about his boyhood: 'In my childhood I used to feel that some power was growing within me, that it was spreading within and beyond me, making me restless, unable to keep quiet...'[9] Narendra had one notable experience in his teens in which he had a vision of a luminous figure. Later he came to believe the figure was the Lord Buddha. Perhaps this was the same experience Swamiji once described to his disciple, Sarat Chandra Chakravarty in these words:

> While at school, one night I was meditating within closed doors and had a fairly deep concentration of mind. How long I meditated in that way, I cannot say. It was over, and I still kept my seat, when from the southern wall of that room a luminous figure stepped out and stood in front of me. There was a wonderful radiance on its visage, yet there seemed to be no play of emotion on it. It was the figure of a Sannyasin absolutely calm, shaven-headed, and staff and kamandalu (a sannyasin's wooden water-bowl) in hand. He gazed at me for some time and seemed as if he would address me. I too gazed at him in speechless wonder. Then a kind of fright seized me, I opened the door, and hurried out of the room. Then it struck me that it was foolish of me to run away like that, that perhaps he might say something to me. But I have never met that figure since. Many a time and often have I thought if again I saw him; I would no more be afraid but would speak to him. But I met him no more.[10]

In 1877, Naren then fourteen, had to take his mother, brother and one sister to Raipur. The party took a train up to Nagpur and thereafter engaged bullock-carts to reach Raipur. It was indeed a great ordeal to travel by bullock-cart for more than a fortnight through deep forests inhabited by

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6. *The Life of Swami Vivekananda*, His Eastern & Western Disciples (Calcutta: Advaita Ashrama, 1979), vol. 1, p. 19. [Hereafter: *Life*]
7. Sister Nivedita, *The Master As I Saw Him* (Calcutta: Advaita Ashrama, 1972), p. 369.
8. *Ibid.*, p. 157.
9. S.N. Dhar, *A Comprehensive Biography of Swami Vivekananda* (Madras: Vivekananda Prakashan Kendra, 1975), p. 44. [Hereafter: *Biography*]
10. *C.W.*, vol. 7, p. 123.

wild animals. In spite of the many trials and tribulations of such a hazardous journey, the young Narendranath was fascinated by the scenic beauty of the forest. His innocent mind was filled up with devotion to God who had created this magnificent beauty. He said later:

> What I saw and felt when going through the forest has forever remained firmly imprinted on my memory, particularly a certain event of one day. We had to travel by the foot of the Vindhya mountains that day...
>
> The slow-moving bullock carts arrived at a place where two mountain peaks, coming forward as though in love, locked themselves in an embrace over the narrow forest path. Observing carefully below the meeting-points I saw that there was a very big cleft from the crest to the foot of the mountain on one side of the path; and filling that cleft, there was hanging in it an enormous honeycomb, the result of the bees' labour for ages. Filled with wonder, as I was pondering over the beginning and the end of that kingdom of bees, my mind became so much absorbed in the thought of the infinite power of God, the controller of the three worlds, that I completely lost my consciousness of the external world for some time. I do not remember how long I was lying in the bullock cart in that condition. When I regained normal consciousness, I found that we had crossed that place and come far away. As I was alone in that cart, no one could know anything about it.[11]

At the Feet of Sri Ramakrishna

Narendranath first came to know about Sri Ramakrishna—his future spiritual teacher—through his college principal, William Hastie. While explaining Wordsworth's poem, 'Excursion', Hastie advised his students to see Ramakrishna Paramahamsa, who experienced a trance like that of the 'wanderer' depicted by the poet. Narendranath later went to see Sri Ramakrishna at Dakshineswar. On his second visit, he had an extraordinary experience when he was touched by Sri Ramakrishna. About it Narendranath said: '...The touch at once gave rise to a novel experience within me. With my eyes open I saw that the walls, and everything in the room, whirled rapidly and vanished into naught, and the whole universe together with my individuality was about to merge in an all-encompassing mysterious void.'[12]

However, Narendranath was captivated by the loving and sweet personality of Sri Ramakrishna. Intimacy between them grew with further acquaintance. One day at Dakshineswar Sri Ramakrishna was trying to impart the highest teaching of Advaita Vedanta—the identity of the individual soul with Brahman. Narendranath remained unconvinced and left the room. He even spoke derisively about it while talking with Hazra. Sensing Narendranath's scepticism, Sri Ramakrishna in a semi-conscious state, came to the veranda and touched him. The effect of that touch was later recounted by Narendranath:

> *The magic touch of the Master that day immediately brought a wonderful change over my mind. I was astounded to find that really there was nothing in the universe but God! I saw it quite clearly...*

> The magic touch of the Master that day immediately brought a wonderful change over my mind. I was astounded

11. *Life*, vol. 1, p. 40.

12. *Ibid.*, p. 78.

to find that really there was nothing in the universe but God! I saw it quite clearly, but kept silent to see whether the impression would last; but it did not abate in the course of the day. I returned home, but there too, everything I saw appeared to be Brahman. I sat down to take my meal, but found that everything—the food, the plate, the person who served, and even myself—was nothing but That. I ate a morsel or two and sat still. I was startled by my mother's words, 'Why do you sit still? Finish your meal,' and then began to eat again. But all the while, whether eating or lying down, or going to College, I had the same experience and felt myself always in a sort of trance. While walking the streets, I noticed cabs plying, but I did not feel inclined to move out of the way. I felt that the cabs and myself were of one stuff. There was no sensation in my limbs, which seemed to be becoming paralyzed. I did not relish eating, and felt as if somebody else were eating. Sometimes I lay down during a meal; after a few minutes I got up and again began to eat. The result would be that on some days I would take too much, but it did no harm. My mother became alarmed and said that there must be something wrong with me. She was afraid that I might not live long. When there was a slight change in this state, the world began to appear dream-like. While walking in Cornwallis Square, I would strike my head against the iron railings to see if they were real or only a dream. This state of things continued for some days. When I became normal again, I realized I must have had a glimpse of the Advaita state. Then it struck me that the words of the scriptures were not false. Thenceforth I could not deny the conclusions of the Advaita philosophy.[13]

13. *Ibid.*, pp. 96–7.

In spite of all this and other experiences, cruel misfortune dogged him and doubts assailed him. After the death of his father in 1884, Narendranath had an experience which he later recounted:

> The summer was over, and the rains set in. The search for a job still on. One evening, after a whole day's fast and exposure to rain I was returning home with tired limbs and a jaded mind; overpowered with exhaustion and unable to move a step forward, I sank down on the outer plinth of a house by the roadside. I can't say whether I was insensible for a time or not. Various thoughts crowded in on my mind, and I was too weak to drive them off and fix my attention on anything in particular. Suddenly I felt as if by some divine power the coverings of my soul were being removed one after another. All my former doubts regarding the coexistence of divine justice and mercy, and the presence of misery in the creation of a Blissful Providence, were automatically solved. By a deep introspection I found the meaning of it all and was satisfied. As I proceeded homewards I found there was no trace of fatigue in the body, and the mind was refreshed with wonderful strength and peace. The night was well nigh over.[14]

The vicissitudes of life followed him like a shadow and impelled him to seek the aid of Sri Ramakrishna in solving the pecuniary needs of the family. On being requested by Sri Ramakrishna to pray to Mother Kali, Narendra went thrice in the same night for this favour, but each time he was wonderstruck to see the living Divine Mother. He once told of this experience as follows:

> Reaching the temple, as I cast my eyes on

14. *Ibid.*, p. 126.

the image, I actually found that the Divine Mother was living and conscious, the perennial fountain of Divine Love and Beauty. I was caught in a surging wave of devotion and love. In an ecstasy of joy I prostrated myself again and again before the Mother and prayed, 'Mother, give me discrimination! Give me renunciation! Give me knowledge and devotion! Grant that I may have the uninterrupted vision of thee!' A serene peace reigned in my soul. The world was forgotten. Only the Divine Mother shone within my heart.[15]

Later, in Cossipore, Sri Ramakrishna granted Naren the supreme experience of *nirvikalpa samādhi.*

Some Extraordinary Experiences

In his itinerary days in North India Narendranath had a unique mystic experience at Kakrighat. He told Swami Akhandananda, his companion, of the experience:

> Oh, Gangadhar! I have just passed through one of the greatest moments of my life. Here under this peepul tree one of the greatest problems of my life has been solved. I have found the oneness of the macrocosm with the microcosm. In this microcosm of the body everything that is there [in the macrocosm], exists. I have seen the whole universe within an atom.[16]

In his notebook he noted in Bengali the gist of that remarkable experience:

> In the beginning was the Word etc. The microcosm and the macrocosm are built on the same plan. Just as the individual soul is encased in the living body, so is the universal soul in the Living Prakriti [Nature]—the objective universe. Shivā [i.e. Kali] is embracing Shiva. This is not a fancy. This covering of the one [Soul] by the other [Nature] is analogous to the relation between an idea and the word expressing it: they are one and the same; and it is only by a mental abstraction that one can distinguish them. Thought is impossible without words. Therefore in the beginning was the Word etc. This dual aspect of the Universal Soul is eternal. So what we perceive or feel is this combination of the Eternally Formed and the Eternally Formless.[17]

In December, 1892, towards the end of his wanderings throughout India, Swamiji proceeded to Kanyakumari. After worshipping the deity, Kanyakumari (the Divine Mother in the form of a young girl), he swam some two furlongs of shark-infested waters in the ocean and reached the two rocks 'sanctified by the blessed feet of the Divine Mother.' Here he sat down on the last stone of India and was lost in meditation for three days (perhaps from Dec. 24 to Dec. 26). At this time he had a rare type of spiritual experience of incalculable value, and became a 'condensed India'. He also received the divine command to embark upon the journey to the West.

Oh, Gangadhar! I have just passed through one of the greatest moments of my life....I have found the oneness of the macrocosm with the microcosm.

(to be continued)

15. *Ibid.*, p. 128.
16. *Ibid.*, p. 250.
17. *Ibid.*, p. 150.

Women—Guardians of Values

DR. SONAL K. AMIN

Honesty, love, compassion, and the need for self-giving, we all know, are the human values that keep the world on a steady course. Without them life on earth becomes a chaos. The author, who is Director of Women's Studies at the Women's Development and Research Centre at Rani Durgavati University (Jabalpur, M.P.), discusses how it is that women and mothers are so important for maintaining social stability and order. It is a highly relevant topic for consideration.

From time immemorial women have been considered guardians of values in society. But let us first understand what we mean by values. By value we mean the worth of a thing. *Value* is taken from the Latin, meaning 'worth' or 'strength'. It comes into Ethics and Axiology from Economics, where it means 'the price of a thing'. Values can be differentiated into two types—instrumental and intrinsic. Instrumental values are not independent but are determined by the end an instrument serves. For example, bread's instrumental value is derived from its ability to satisfy hunger. In fact, Herbert Spencer has given a long list of things, from an umbrella upwards, to explain instrumental value. However, certain things are worth pursuing for their own sake. So they are said to have intrinsic value, which is independent. When we call women 'guardians of values', we mean that women are guarding something which is full of intrinsic value to our society. These cherished values are the beliefs and codes of conduct that lead to integration and harmony in society and interpersonal relationships, and those which take us toward spiritual virtues and happiness, as opposed to the sorrows of materialism and overindulgence.

For the philosopher Kant, goodwill towards men is intrinsically valuable. Sidgwick, on the other hand, held that pleasure is intrinsically valuable. We can put our own claims for such other things as love, wisdom, truth, freedom, order, life, and so on. Socrates and Plato raised the question of what is *the good* but never really answered what it was. G.E. Moore in his *Principia Ethica* concluded that *the good* is indefinable.

For us, I feel, the three most celebrated values are Truth, Beauty and Goodness, however hard they may be for us to define. They correspond to the cognitive, affective and volitional faculties of the human being as aspects of his thinking, feeling, and willing. According to our basic personality we choose one of these values. What is surprising is that, if we develop any one of these the other two follow automatically: a good person will automatically become truthful and beautiful.

Values exist only in human society. For in the entire creation man alone is exceptionally rational and spiritually sensitive. The sensitivity somehow awakens in him the *sense* of values, and through reason he tries to comprehend and cultivate this *sense*. Values can't be called facts, because they do not have an empirical existence; they do not exist in space and time, and yet they are real, nonetheless. Plato spoke of the world as being made of ideas, or values.

Women are called the guardians of values because, as mothers, they teach the children what is right and what is wrong, what is good, what is beautiful, and what is true. The first lesson a child learns is in the lap of its mother. The mother in fact is a guide to the entire family. It is said: if you educate a male, you teach him alone; but if you educate a woman you educate a whole family.

Psychologists agree that the first five years are the most formative years of one's life. It is then that the foundation for the developing personality is laid. The question naturally arises: are women giving the right values to the child, who is the future of the nation? But no one can ever really answer this question definitively. Undoubtedly, some of us will be found unhappy with the present state of affairs in the world. Mankind today is living a wretched existence. In everything he must struggle, as it were, for his very breath. Hatreds abound, as also jealousy, competition, strife, lack of love, and lack of compassion.

Man lives amidst conflict. He is at conflict within himself, with those around him, and with Nature, which he is always trying to conquer. Relationships are breaking up, men are pitched against other men, and societies against societies. Existentialism very aptly describes the state of man as he is today: very much unconnected and alone. If women are guardians of values and as mothers, they are the first teachers of the child, should they not be in a position to analyse and feel deeply for the kind of values they are to give to future generations? In their hands is the future of mankind, their responsibility is indeed very great!

Let us look at what mothers and educators are doing in the name of instilling values in the child. They teach the codes of conduct; they imbue the child with a list of do's and don'ts. Obviously their method of imparting values to their offspring, especially if they themselves are in ignorance and disadvantage, may be subject to some shortcomings. By handing down a list of values, the 'educator' is conditioning a child. She is creating a rift in its young mind between *what is* and what *ought to be*. No wonder there is so much conflict in the world! And still she succeeds!

The task of a mother, or of any educator, is like that of a gardener: A gardener gives water to the plants, does weeding, lets sunlight fall on the tender growth, and protects them from animals and other dangers. In such protected environs the plants flower and eventually bear fruit. So also with the child. Knowledge is always an inner flowering. It is from the inside outwards. If an atmosphere of love and security and freedom from want is provided all around, a child will flower; otherwise it withers and becomes an unhappy human being. All immoral and antisocial acts are done by unhappy people. One cannot be inwardly happy and yet murder somebody. To kill or do violence to another, one must first find oneself in a sea of anger and frustration!

Indian ethics is based on spirituality, the conscious (and even subconscious) awareness of the unity of one's self with others....It is the ancient ideal of the Vedic ṛṣis of vasudhaiva-kuṭumbakam, *the wholeness and oneness of the human family.*

Indian ethics is based on spirituality, the conscious (and even subconscious) awareness of the unity of one's self with others. As children we learn about our real nature, or have an image of it *given to us* by

our loving parent. Can the importance of this ever be over-estimated? Then follows healthy development of personality and behaviour patterns that will last our whole lifetime. The highest value, Vedanta teaches us, is self-knowledge. *Ātmānam viddhi*, know yourself, the Upanishads say. The knowledge that we are eternally free and blissful beings with the potential ability to consciously experience this blessed sate—this is the highest value. So the purpose of Indian ethics is not merely to rear up a rational boy or girl, man or woman, but to open the way for him/her to develop the vast potential of the inner spiritual nature. Mothers should therefore acquire self-knowledge for themselves and then pass this treasure on to their sons and daughters. Then alone will all the traditional values of culture and society be really safeguarded.

Traditionally, women have turned to religion to learn and teach values. It is imperative that the right aspect of religion is emphasized. Religion is like the ancient Roman god Janus, with two heads. One of the heads looked to the inner life. Perhaps the other looked out on the world, and this is why religion today has a dual character.

As religion is a social force, it maintains the status quo. It maintains a conservative influence on society, identifying itself with the existing socio-cultural patterns and social interactions. On the other hand, religion provides the impetus to many liberating movements and social changes. This creative and liberating aspect should be emphasized more by women nowadays. In this way religion will give the message of compassion, equality and humanitarianism, and stimulate revolutionary social changes. It was emphasis on the conservative element in the past which allowed the development of *suttee*, child marriage, ban on widow remarriage, rampant growth of superstition and priestcraft, and denial of the right of women and of the lowly to read the Vedas—in short all the social oppressions of the women and the poor. Now many changes are coming, and women should protest against unjust discriminations which continue to oppress them. For religion stands for spiritual growth, and this can only come in an atmosphere of freedom. Prophets of all true religions have given the same message of love and equality irrespective of class or caste, gender, colour or country.

It is what Radhakrishnan and Swami Vivekananda called spiritual humanism, in which the entire universe is included. It is the ancient ideal of the Vedic *ṛṣis* of *vasudhaiva kutumbakam*, of the wholeness and oneness of the human family. So religion should be understood as spiritual humanism, and not merely as humanism. Humanism by itself becomes a materialistic concept. Spiritual humanism considers all beings as spiritual entities and service to them as worship of the Highest. It was in this sense that Swami Vivekananda considered the greatest worship to be the service of the *daridra nārāyaṇa*, the poor, the lowly and the downtrodden.

As mothers women should emphasize the spiritual unity of the entire creation. All religions are expression of the one truth. Mothers should encourage their children to believe with Vivekananda, without fear, that it is good and proper to sit with and worship with people of all faiths. They can go to the mosque and pray with the Mussalmans and retain their own Hindu identity. They can go to the church and bow down before the cross; go to the Buddhist temple; and meditate in a temple or solitary place with the Hindus.

When we look at India and the world today, what do we find?—killing of people and political tension in the name of religion; without reason Muslims, Christians, Hin-

thus and others fighting among themselves for mean worldly desires. Anything which divides man from man, be it in the name of religion, language, state or national loyalty, or creed, cannot be the best that our culture has to offer! Religion means unity and wholeness. Fragmentation is anathema to religion. Perhaps more wars have been fought over religious (so-called) issues than for any other reasons. Even today people are dying in such misery in many parts of the world. Women all over the world should take a stand against this mindlessness; for no matter who dies it must be some mother's child.

Mahatma Gandhi has admitted that considering the entire history of mankind, maximum injustice has been done against women. He also said that no doubt to do injustice is a sin, but to put up with injustice is a greater sin. This surely must be taken as being addressed to women, particularly to Indian women. They have been enduring injustice for a very long time. Consequently, their feelings of fear and inferiority has been responsible for their 'patient suffering', often wrongly ascribed to them as a noble virtue in this context. Therefore in this modern age of progress and social change, daughters and wives should learn how to deal with injustices. When their ability to be patient sufferers is a genuine virtue, it will be a source of great strength to them. It is, thus, only when they themselves are courageous and stand for what is good and right that they can teach values more effectively to their children.

Swami Vivekananda looked upon courage as the highest spiritual quality and exhorted women to be like Goddess Durga, or Shakti, who is the destroyer of evil. Even Lord Krishna tells Arjuna to pick up his weapon (the Gāṇḍīva) and fight evil and injustice. To guard values one has at times to become active and take proper steps to oppose those things which threaten the very existence of values.

In today's context, mothers have a greater responsibility in the upbringing of girls, so that, equally with boys, they can participate in the task of nation-building. About fifty per cent of the country's population is composed of girls and women. If the majority of them are illiterate and backward, deprived of equal opportunities, it is obvious that the fruits of national development have not reached the female population fairly. They have less access to social services, productive assets, skills, education, health care, political and judicial process, etc. and are subject to greater exploitation. Mothers have the duty to bring up their daughters to be strong enough to forge ahead in spite of these odds.

Learning to show respect towards women begins at home. If sons see their sisters are being discriminated against by being given inferior quality of food and less medical care, and are deprived of education and property rights, that their mothers are not involved in family decision making, the message they receive is that females are not as important as males. Instead of regard, they learn to disregard the female sex. Mothers should see to it that their sons see and learn the right things at home.

Swami Vivekananda looked upon courage as the highest spiritual quality and exhorted women to be like Goddess Durga, or Shakti, who is the destroyer of evil....Woman has to learn to manifest her own Divinity and give to society what she alone can give. The very survival of society depends on her contribution.

Women are guardians of values in another sense also. The feminine personality is more inclined towards love and nurturing. To love unselfishly there must be control of one's own ego; it is forgetting oneself for the other. The mother loves and nurtures the child. The masculine personality is an aggressive one. It wants to conquer and possess. It is naturally egoistic. Neitzche, a German philosopher, ridiculed Buddha and Christ, calling them 'women'. Perhaps like him, many criticized the great Souls who were born on earth to lift up humanity. Buddha, Christ, Mahavir and Gandhi were all highly developed personalities. They had all the good male and female qualities such as love, self-surrender, kindness, endurance, indomitable willpower, and courage to face down evils. But unfortunately it seems their voices went unheard by most of the world. Perhaps the reason was that women did not come out and share with them the fight to make the world better. Brahmababa of Prajapita Brahmakumari Ishwariya Vishvavidyalaya chose women and not men to spread his message because he knew that women have many strengths that men do not have, and that they are closer to the truth than men. But they needed to be pushed in the forefront. So he placed the *jñān-kalaśa* on woman's shoulders; that is, he gave her Knowledge and spiritual strength. He taught her to stand on her feet and shed off harmful male dominance and social pressures which reduce her to a sex-object and a puppet.

Today if culture and civilization is to be saved, if all that is valuable in our traditional Indian life is to be saved, women must take some hand in leading society. The feminine traits such as those described in the *Gītā* (10.34)—memory, intelligence, constancy and forbearance—are needed more than ever before to create a society based on love and compassion. The human mind has indeed become distorted: the development of mankind is not the development of the male alone. Women have not had enough say in the matter. No wonder human development is now a lopsided growth! In order to bring a balance, women's development should now have more emphasis.

A woman has a personality different from that of a male. Difference has wrongly been understood as inferiority. Woman has to grow as woman, according to her own nature. Neither should she ape the men, becoming as in Western countries carbon copies of men, nor should she become, as in India, a shadow of men. She has to learn to be herself, to manifest her own Divinity, and give to society what she alone can give. The very survival of society depends on her contribution. Only then can she be a true guardian of values. ❐

> All healthy social changes are the manifestations of the spiritual forces working within, and if these are strong and well adjusted, society will arrange itself accordingly. Each individual has to work out his own salvation; there is no other way, and so also with nations.
>
> —*Swami Vivekananda*

Mukti

SASWATA DE

Away from the glare of manifestations
Beyond in darkness quiet,
Serene, in bliss, all wants fulfilled,
Immersed in me I lie.
From depths of void black vibrate up—*'Om Shanti Om.'*

No thought haunts me, no ails or pains,
They strike the body and mind.
Calm, untouched, I watch the play
Of Maya's queer delights.
Gusts of joy permeate my being, whispering—*'Om Shanti Om.'*

Left behind is the ephemeral life,
Of manifold joys and sorrows.
Cast aside are alluring dreams
Now so jolly, now morose.
In all turmoils now rings a voice—*'Om Shanti Om.'*

This body is false, fearful nightmare—
The mind all the more so.
Who cares for them? They go back whence
They came—a magic show.
Beyond it, and all throughout, reverberates—*'Om Shanti Om.'*

Alone and naked you came to this world.
Thus must you leave it behind.
Why then, O man, do you clamp yourself
With fetters of body and mind?
Yet through this fallacy, Truth calls and calls—*'Om Shanti Om.'*

Good-bye Nature, farewell to earth,
Now I merge in me.
Life has stopped, and so has death,
I go beyond Duality.
In the Darkness that lights all, I myself am—*'Om Shanti Om.'*

Sri Ramakrishna's Vision (Darshana) as Conceived by Swami Vivekananda

SHANTI DIGHE

Swamiji composed a beautiful hymn in Sanskrit to Sri Ramakrishna. It is chanted and sung in Ramakrishna Math and Mission Centres in India and abroad. Here the author, of Baroda in Gujarat, shares with us her translation and meditations on the deep meaning of the stanzas.

Once Girish Ghosh requested Swamiji to write a biography of Thakur, Sri Ramakrishna. Never was Swami Vivekananda seen so much perturbed! In a trembling voice he exclaimed: 'G.C., ask me to dry up the ocean, ask me to crumble the Himalayas—I will do so. But do not ask me to do the impossible.'

Swamiji never wrote Sri Ramakrishna's biography, but in an unexpected way, in a most magnificent manner he did express his profound feelings regarding Sri Thakur, which illumines the many-faceted *avatāra-līlā*, or divine play, of Ramakrishna and tells more than any voluminous work. In the *stotra* composition *Khaṇḍana-bhava-bandhana*, 'O Breaker of the World's Bondage', he has bequeathed to us an image of Sri Thakur which will remain an eternal and living inspiration for all the generations to come.

Sri Ramakrishna proclaimed the acceptability of all the religious beliefs as leading to God-realization. He also proclaimed the acceptability of all the various modes of worship: through *jñānā, bhakti, dhyāna*, and *karma*—through knowledge, devotion, meditation and work.

Swamiji in his first couplet extols the *svarūpa*, nature, of *Jñāna-mūrti-Ramakrishna*, of Sri Ramakrishna the Embodiment of Knowledge:

खण्डन-भव-बन्धन जग-
वन्दन वन्दि तोमाय ।
निरञ्जन नररूपधर
निर्गुण गुणमय ॥

Khaṇḍana-bhava-bandhana jaga-
vandana vandi tomāy;
Nirañjana nararūpadhara
nirguṇa guṇamay.

O you venerable in all the three worlds, I bow to thee—the destroyer of bondage of existence, which is due to ignorance and which limits the unlimited Self. Thus you release the bonds and lead us to *mokṣa*, final liberation. In your unlimited compassion for the grossly-shackled souls, you have accepted the human form, *nara-deha*, with all its limiting adjuncts *(upādhis)*. But these cannot circumscribe you fully in any way, nor darken you with any blemish—you are *nirañjana*, without any stain.

You are the *triguṇātīta-nirguṇa-brahman*, the Supreme Lord, beyond all qualities and attributes. But all the same, you appear as the *saguṇa-brahman*, the Personal God who can be understood and realized by limited mortals. As *nirguṇa*, you are beyond comprehension, but as *saguṇa*, (in this fashion) you are

close to us—near and dear to us.

मोचन-अघदूषण जग-
भूषण चिद्घनकाय ।
ज्ञानाञ्जन-विमल-नयन
वीक्षणे मोह जाय ॥

Mocana-aghadūṣaṇa jaga-
bhūṣaṇa cidghanakāy;
Jñānāñjana-vimala-nayana
vīkṣaṇe moha jāy.

Next Swamiji undertakes a *svarūpa-varṇana,* a spiritual description of the sublime Entity who can become *dhyānagamya* (attainable through *dhyāna*) for the *jñāni* as well as the *bhakta.*

We are in the grip of evil and you have appeared to save us from sin of the *kali-yuga* (Iron-Age). And thus you are *jaga-bhūṣaṇa,* a great ornament for the world, which shines in its own splendour and removes darkness.

Even this simile is not quite enough. Swamiji describes him as *cid-ghana-kāy*—a personified and intensified embodiment of Consciousness *caitanya,* or *cit-svarūpa.*

O Renouncer of lust and greed, the wholly despicable clinging to sense enjoyments; Lord of Renouncers, O Best of Men, grant us devotion to thy Lotus Feet!

In all mercy you have taken the *rāma-kṛṣṇa-tanu,* the Ramakrishna form, with your beautiful eyes—purified as they are by the *jñānarūpa-añjan* (collyrium of knowledge). These are like beacons of light which destroy the delusion born of the *tamo-guṇa* (darkening and veiling power of māyā); *vīkṣaṇe moha jāy,* at their glance delusion vanishes!

भास्वर भाव-सागर चिर
उन्मद प्रेम-पाथार ।
भक्तार्जन-युगलचरण
तारण-भव-पार ॥

Bhāsvara bhāva-sāgara cira-
unmada prema-pāthār;
Bhaktārjana-yugalacaraṇa
tāraṇa-bhava-pār.

O Effulgent ocean of ecstasy, always in waves, ocean of love; Thy two feet possessed by devotees carry me across the ocean of life.

Here Swamiji describes the *bhakta-vatsala*-Ramakrishna—an Ocean of Love—, lustrous and turbulent with the upsurge of *bhāva* and *prema*—the inebriation of divine love—, creating similar upsurge in the hearts of the devotees. Not merely a dry knower of the attributeless One! And he is there to help his devotees cross the *bhava-sāgara,* the 'ocean' of this world—the devotee who has taken resort at his Lotus Feet and is treading the path of *bhakti-yoga!*

जृंभित-युग-ईश्वर जगद्-
ईश्वर योग सहाय ।
निरोधन समाहित-मन
निरखि तव कृपाय ॥

Jṛmbhita-yuga-īśvara jagad-
īśvara yogasahāy;
Nirodhana samāhita-mana
nirakhi tava kṛpāy.

In you we perceive the revelation *(prakāśa)* of the Supreme Lord *(jagadīśvara)* as a *yogāvatāra-yuga-īśvara* (Incarnation); you who are the prop of yoga, the Goal for which we aspire. It is with your grace *(īśvara-praṇidhāna)* that the yogi can control his senses and have your vision with a mind and intellect *(mana)* that are controlled *(samāhita, niruddha).*

—a vision for *dhyānayoga* (meditation) practised by the *rāja-yogi!*

भञ्जन-दुःखगञ्जन करु-
णाघन कर्मकठोर ।
प्राणार्पण-जगत-तारण
कृन्तन-कलिडोर ॥

Bhañjana-duḥkhagañjana karu-
ṇāghana karma-kaṭhor;
Prāṇārpaṇa-jagata-tāraṇa
kṛntana-kaliḍor.

The portrait of a great *karma-yogi* emerges:

> By the strength of firm conviction you break the spell of suffering. You offer your whole life and body for the service of mankind to set all free from the iron bondage of the kali-yuga. But your heart is all compassion for the fallen—you have cried in compassion for the ailing humanity. You did not remain isolated in your own higher state of sublimity. You lived and taught a great ideal— 'Live for others, not for your own petty self.'

Sri Ramakrishna washes away the sins of his dear devotees with his loving tears, bearing much of the poison, like Lord Shiva. At the end of his days when his suffering was unbearable, he uttered piteously, 'I am bearing all this suffering for your sake; if you say let this body fall, then this body will fall this very moment!'

Sri Ramakrishna placed certain precepts before us which read like mantras. Swamiji, the expert commentator and poet *(bhāṣyakāra)*, brings out the inner implications beautifully as he describes the values on which the Ramakrishna *darśana* is based:

वञ्चन-कामकाञ्चन अति-
निन्दित-इन्द्रिय-राग ।
त्यागीश्वर हे नरवर
देह पदे अनुराग ॥

Vañcana-kāmakāñcana ati-
nindita-indriya-rāg;
Tyāgīśvara he naravara
deha pade anurāg.

O Renouncer of lust and greed, the wholly despicable clinging to sense enjoyments; Lord of Renouncers, O best of men, grant us devotion to thy Lotus Feet!

Kāminī-kāñcana-tyāga: Swamiji calls Sri Ramakrishna the perfect renouncer *(sannyāsi)* of lust and gold! (The word *kāminī* [woman] is here used in the abstract, meaning lust.) Swamiji, like Thakur, used to say, get rid of that concept of woman as *kāminī*. He is not demeaning the woman; he is decrying the mental attitude of *bhogāśakti*, attachment to sense-enjoyment. A woman, according to Sri Ramakrishna, is *devī-svarūpa-śakti*, the glory and power of the Lord, to be respected and revered, not just a thing of enjoyment. Similarly, the attraction for money, best signified by the greed for gold—*kāñcana*, is deplorable. Money when used for satisfying our sense-enjoyment is evil. He tells his householder-disciples to earn money to maintain themselves and their families, also in order to be able to do some good to others. In the Hindu scriptures, Lakshmi is worshipped as the divine entity symbolizing wealth. Poverty is considered an evil; birth in a prosperous family is considered fortunate, the fruit of good deeds of previous births. In the *Gītā*, Sri Krishna says a person who earnestly tries to lead a spiritual life, but for some reason or other fails to attain the Highest—this person, a *yoga-bhraṣṭa*, in his future birth will be born in the home of 'the pure and the prosperous' *(śucīnām-śrīmatām-gehe)*.

According to Ramakrishna *darśana*, sense-enjoyment *(indriya-rāga)* is indeed deplorable *(ati-nindita)*. In the *Kaṭha-Upaniṣad*, the sense organs *(indriyas)* are compared to horses drawing the chariot of

the body, which must be held in control—only one who has the horses in control by the rein of the mind can attain to God-realization. *Tyāga,* renunciation, holds the highest place among all his admonitions. Himself a supreme renouncer, Sri Ramakrishna asks his disciples to be imbued with this great tenet of *tyāga.* In the *Īśāvāsya-Upaniṣad* it is said: 'Live happily by renunciation; do not covet other people's wealth'—*tena tyaktena bhuñjīthāḥ mā gṛdhaḥ kasyasvid dhanam.*

Swamiji calls Sri Ramakrishna *'Naravara'*—the best among humans, who has won over all these weaknesses to which a human is exposed. Ramakrishna is *tyāgīśvara,* renunciation personified! His love for humanity, his involvement, is not motivated by desire *(sakāma);* he has discarded *kāma-kāñcana* and he abhors sense attraction. Swamiji prays to him on behalf of all of us: *'deha pade anurāg'*—Grant us devotion to your Lotus Feet! If only we could love this great Personality, even that would save us. Loving brings understanding; even a little understanding of these great precepts could lead us to salvation.

निर्भय गतसंशय दृढ-
निश्चयमानसवान ।
निष्कारण भकत-शरण
त्यजि जातिकुलमान ॥

Nirbhaya gatasaṁśaya dṛḍha-
niścaya-mānasavān;
Niṣkāraṇa bhakata-śaraṇa
tyaji jātikulamān.

Fearless, dispeller of doubts, possessing a mind of firm resolve; motiveless, casting away pride of caste and lineage, Thou art the refuge of the devotees.

Swamiji points out how Sri Ramakrishna can be the strongest, staunchest support for us—'Fearless One', without doubts, and dispeller of doubts. Fear and doubt are the worst enemies. In Sri Ramakrishna's proximity all fears and doubts vanish. If our surrender is total, our faith in our guru staunch, he will lead us on the right path holding our hand in his strong grip, pointing out the goal—God-realization! Because he is the loving Mother-Father-God in One, his love for his devotees is spontaneous, knows no bar of caste or creed. Swamiji points out how Sri Thakur attacks the stronghold of the caste system—a devotee has no caste. All are equal in the *durbar* of God!

A prayer now comes from the bottom of the Bhakta's (Swamiji's) heart—

सम्पद तव श्रीपद भव
गोष्पद-वारि यथाय ।
प्रेमार्पण समदरशन
जगजन-दुःख जाय ॥

Sampada tava śrīpada bhava
goṣpada-vāri yathāy;
Premārpaṇa samadaraśana
jagajana-duḥkha jāy.

O Lord, the most coveted thing in my life is thy lotus feet. If I can take sanctuary at your feet, this limitless *bhavasāgara* (ocean of worldly existence) will be reduced to a small puddle of rainwater made by the impression of the hoof of a cow *(goṣpadavāri).* O Dispenser of love *(premārpaṇa),* in whose sight all are equal *(samadarśana),* at your behest the grief and distress of the people in the world disappears instantaneously—*jagajana-duḥkha jāy!*

Next Swamiji offers his salutations to Sri Ramakrishna, the *Parameśvara,* in his full splendour—

नमो नमो प्रभु वाक्यमनातीत
मनोवचनैकाधार ।

ज्योतिर ज्योति उजल हृदिकन्दर
तुमि तमभञ्जनहार ॥

Namo namo prabhu vākhyamanātīta
manovacanaikādhār;
Jyotira jyoti ujala hṛdikandara
tumi tamabhañjanahār.

You are *vākyamanāfīta*—beyond the ken of speech and mind; yet you are the sole support of speech and mind—*manovacanaikādhār*—(a great precept of Vedanta which proclaims Divine Consciousness *[caitanya]* as the support *[adhiṣṭ hāna]* for all the *viśva-saṁisāra-jīva-jagat,* world of created beings). O Illuminer of the heart's cave, thou dost dispel the darkness of ignorance! O Lord, you are the ultimate Revealer—the *paramjñāna-svarūpa,* the Bestower of all true knowledge. It is by your gift of spiritual consciousness *(jñāna-prasāda)* that we are able to realize the ultimate Truth; by your Grace, by your Light, by your Sight we live, we see, we understand!

Swamiji beautifully describes this *jñāna-śakti,* which burns like a lamp in every heart—*jyotira jyoti ujala hṛdikandara.* It is impossible to express the nature of this light. It removes all darkness of ignorance and brightens our hearts with the light of divine Knowledge. The Omnipotent Lord *(sarva-śaktimān-īśvara)* is the giver of energy and power—the strength *(śakti)* that shines in every being is the gift of God.

धे धे धे लंग रंग भंग बाजे अंग संग मृदंग
गाइछे छन्द भकतवृन्द आरति तोमार ॥

जय जय आरति तोमार
हर हर आरति तोमार
शिव शिव आरति तोमार ॥

Dhe dhe dhe laṅga raṅga bhaṅga
bāje aṅga saṅga mṛdaṅga;
gāiche chanda bhakatavṛnda ārati tomār.

jaya jaya ārati tomār
hara hara ārati tomār
śiva śiva ārati tomār.

Melodiously the assembled devotees sing thy rati (worship with lighted lamps) accompanied with the sounds of the musical instruments, singing: 'Victory to you! To you our *ārati! Hara! Hara! Shiva! Shiva!* To you our *ārati!'*

खण्डन-भव-बन्धन जग-
वन्दन वन्दि तोमाय ।
निरञ्जन नररूपधर
निर्गुण गुणमय ॥

Khaṇḍana-bhava-bandhana jaga-
vandana vandi tomāy;
Nirañjana nararūpadhara
nirguṇa guṇamay.

O Breaker of the world's bondage, by the world adored, I worship thee!... ❐

Even the least work done for others awakens the power within; even thinking the least good of others gradually instils into the heart the strength of a lion. I love you all ever so much, but I wish you all to die working for others—I should rather be glad to see you do that!...Get up, and put your shoulders to the wheel—how long is this life for? As you have come into this world, leave some mark behind. Otherwise, where is the difference between you and the trees and stones?

—*Swami Vivekananda*

Philosophical Foundation of Communication in Ancient India

KIRAN RAMACHANDRAN NAIR

The great [Vedic] poet-seer Valmiki's magnum opus, *the* Ramayana, *laid the basis for poetical analysis of the 'Art of Speech'. In this work, Valmiki emphasized the importance of fine speech and discourse, that was an important determinant of cultural refinement and social status.*

It is necessary to re-examine the present trend in communication, which is an unhappy legacy of our colonial past and has reduced this vital art to a mere shell without soul.

Introduction

Man's quest for knowledge and his exploration of nature led him to delve into the 'why' of things and improve his communication skills in order to arrive at the answer faster. Human dialogue which began in a primitive way assumed such complex and dynamic proportions that this has set man apart from all other creatures. Communications, with its varied connotations, denotations, and symbolic and linguistic dimensions, has lent wings to the thoughts and ideas of many a great thinker, orator, philosopher, poet and prophet.

Communication has emerged as a unifying force of 'self and self' between the words 'common, community and communication,' Karl Jaspers asserted.[1] Cicero, a famous thinker and orator, held philosophy to be the lodestar of life, without which human life itself could not exist. If Cicero held philosophy to be the life-breath of man, *communication* has been acclaimed *instrumental* for the ultimate aim of philosophy, and is the pivotal force of knowledge, unity and truth. This calls for a closer examination of the foundation of this creative, unifying and enlightening art, which derives its unique style, ideas and language from a distinct philosophy in which it is rooted.

The philosophy underlying communication is drawn from a vast reservoir of ideas, thoughts, beliefs and attitudes which are the hallmarks of a culture or community with its unique religious, moral, social and political structure. Language has helped man to cognize the world and unravel many of the mysteries that surround it. If philosophy lent direction to man's life, language was the instrument of expression which immortalized the words of poets and prophets alike.

Philosophical Foundation

Philosophic reflections about communication are as old as philosophy, originating roughly in what German philosopher Karl Jaspers called 'axial time' (ca. 800–200 BC) with Vedantism and Buddhism in India, Confucianism and Taoism in China, and classical Greek philosophy in Europe.[2] The elaborate discussions about

1. Karl Jaspers, *Truth as Communicability*, Free Press.

2. Eugen Baer, 'Philosophy of Communication' (section), *Encyclopedia of Communication*, vol. 1, p. 354.

the art of speech in Sanskrit literature, acknowledged as the oldest texts in the world, give us the philosophical foundation of communication in ancient India. It is here indeed that we find 'the genius and the genesis of the art of speaking, right from the Vedic times.'[3]

The divine origin of speech can be traced to the ancient Vedic text, the *Rig-veda*, which proclaims: 'From Gods emanated the Divine speech, and the creatures on the earth speak it in manifold forms.' The *sabdabrahman*, or the 'motive sound energy', which was the first manifestation in the process of creation has been one of the greatest boons to mankind in the form of expressed speech. This unique faculty of communication enshrined in man sets him apart from all other creations of God.

Communication in India, viewed as eclectic in approach, has been a vital part of tradition, culture and civilization. The oral tradition was the precursor of all modern interpersonal, group, and mass communication. Through it, we find that God speaks to man, and man speaks to God, in worship, prayer and songs. The oral tradition gave expression to the best classical works of ancient India which are rooted deep in philosophy, religious feeling and values.

The oral tradition of communication in the Vedic society was predominantly of a deliberative nature. Public debates were crucial to conducting society in an orderly and peaceful manner. The chief Vedic assemblies—*vidatha*, *sabhā*, and *samiti*—discharged a unique political communication function.[4] 'Persuasion' and 'consensus', from which propaganda and public opinion in modern times took the cue, were characteristic of early communication in India. The Vedic assembly, *samiti*, was to display a harmony in its conduct as laid down in the *Rig-veda* and *Atharva-veda*. The Vedic poet advocated commonness in counsel *(mantra)*, assembly *(samiti)*, heart *(manas)* and a unity of thought *(citta)*. Thus Vedic communication, besides the pursuit of truth, had as one of its foremost objectives: establishing a uniform understanding and harmony.[5]

History of Vedic literature in India, *itihāsa*, gives an account of the remote period of human origin and its lessons for human conduct. Historical accounts by court historians in many ruling dynasties give an insight into the communication modes of ancient India. Classical Sanskrit works, like the *Ramayana* and the *Mahabharata*, are repositories of not only Hindu religious convictions and values of the day, but also transmit epitomized thoughts. Extensive references are made to the art of speech and communication between man and God, between men and women, between the king and his subjects. The sage and cosmic voyager, Narada, is the chief communicator-mediator between the affairs of heaven and earth.

The great poet-seer Valmiki's *magnum opus*, the *Ramayana*, laid the basis for poetical analysis of the 'Art of Speech'. In this work, Valmiki emphasized the importance of fine speech and discourse, that was an important determinant of cultural refinement and social status. The frequent references to good and pleasing speech in the *Ramayana* reveals the socio-cultural importance of the art of communication. According to one scholar, society in Valmiki's time 'was extremely civilized, not only in external

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3. P.K. Gayatri, 'An Approach to the Art of Speech in Sanskrit Kavyas', *Bharati*, 1987–88, no. 17, p. 139.
4. R.S. Sharma, *Indian Civilization in Lasswell*, editor, Propaganda and Public Opinion, Free Press, p. 175.
5. *Ibid.*, p. 176.

behaviour, but also in the employed sweet and polite speech, and [people] addressed one another in a variety of ways.'[6]

Many versatile orators are found in the epic, *Mahabharata*, and this period of ancient India saw a passionate advocacy of refined communication and achievement of high distinction in oral discourse and the art of speech. The period has the account of the lady ascetic, Sulabhā, an authority on *Anvisaki* (logical philosophy), whose exposition on the cannons of sound speech is worth a careful study.

Kautilya's *Arthaśāstra*, one of the oldest known political treatises, is replete with detailed discussions on the nature and use of communications in statecraft. Kautilya outlines in his treatise principles for writing royal edicts, the role of secret communication, staged events, propaganda and disinformation. He also, surprisingly, discusses defamation and the penalty for it.[7] Kautilya integrates public opinion, communication and statecraft in his treatise, even before the West could theorize such concepts.

Written communication came to stay by the third century BC. The royal edicts Ashoka inscribed on rocks and pillars were instrumental in spreading Buddhism. In fact the spread of Buddhism can be called one of the greatest communication events in Indian history. The Buddhist 'Jātaka Tales' carried the message of peace and brotherhood and gave mankind lessons on the values to be upheld in life.

Besides the *Ramayana* and *Mahabharata*, ancient compositions such as those in folklore, mythological stories, legends and ballads not only formed the core of the traditional media of communication in India, but have also been used effectively in the modern era too, to entertain and transmit desirable social values. The oral tradition which dates back to antiquity was based on religious philosophy. Swami Vivekananda taught that spirituality is the soul of Indian culture, and indeed, it is this force that has inspired, motivated and transformed India up to the present. Our religious philosophy is intensely concerned with social problems.

The oral communicative tradition of India is remarkable for its unbelievably long continuity, preserved through the transmission of ideas, knowledge, religion and culture over several millennia. There was tremendous unity of tradition in the land, underlying our cultural diversity. This in spite of the absence of electricity, the press and modern 'media'.[8] It gives us a picture of the potency of our ancient oral tradition which has withstood even the onslaught of all the modern communications technology. Uncounted philosophers and broadcasters of India's culture drew from this vast reservoir of oral tradition, even in the modern era, to spread and popularize their ideas and found that it was quite effective. Tradition has a reinforcing effect on the diffusion of ideas. This view, it is stated, is '...applicable to any type of communication. Communicators always stand in culture-bound and language-specific traditions that support their "life-worlds". They in turn renew and transmit these traditions by acting communicatively.'[9]

Communication performed the important function of integrating mankind by serving as a foundation facilitating practical human understanding. The rhetorician

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6. S.N. Vyas, *India in the Ramayana Age*, Delhi, 1967, p. 97.
7. *Kautilya's Arthasastra*, vol. 2.
8. cf. Krishan Sondhi, *Communication and Values* (Bombay: Somaiya Publs., Pvt. Ltd., 1985), p. 27.
9. Eugen Baer, p. 356.

Daṇḍin (India, *fl.* 6th and 7th century), emphasizes: 'By all means, life's journey in this world is carried on with the help of words and words only, sanctioned by the literati as well as otherwise.'[10] Thus Communication was to enhance man's understanding of life, and not merely create awareness sans realization.

The continuous and strong emphasis for careful application of words was an important determinant of the order and harmony that prevailed in ancient India. There are several references in the *Gita* to the significance of pleasing and truthful speech, which indicated cultural refinement and intellectual scholarship and left a lasting impression on the hearer. *'The speech that causes no excitement and which is truthful, pleasant and beneficial, and also the sacred recitation—these are said to form the austerity of speech.'* (*Gita*, 17.15).

In our present age of 'information societies' it is essential for our people interested in mass communications to reflect on the nobility of our ancient communication practices and then pause for a while to see if they are going the right way—towards peace and universal brotherhood. This realization demands a judicious application of communication to bring out the better side of human nature and take him nearer to the Godhead.

Conclusion

Indian civilization rests on an ancient glorious tradition and culture—a Himalayas of power and learning. Ancient communication in India was enshrined in one of the finest philosophic strains and received sanction from a culture with an amazing endurance and tenacity. Ancient communication in India can be credited as one of the most refined in the world.

But communication systems in India, and the media, are becoming increasingly westernized and materialistic in thought-content and conduct. Despite this, the ancient spiritual values communicated by India's rich philosophic tradition still stands firm, and, as with the storms in the past, this storm too will have to be weathered.

It is necessary to re-examine the present trend in communication, which is an unhappy legacy of our colonial past and has reduced this vital art to a mere shell without soul. Its drying reservoir will have to be replenished from the refreshing springs of our ancient eternal wisdom. Our present generation of mass communicators needs to reorient itself and revive values which will give rise to a more prosperous, rejuvenated and enlightened India. ❐

10. Sastri C. Sankararama, editor, Text and Trans. *Kavyadarsa*, 1.3, p. 5.

This is the first lesson to learn: be determined not to curse anything outside, not to lay the blame upon any one outside, but be a man, stand up, lay the blame on yourself. You will find, that is always true. Get hold of yourself.

—*Swami Vivekananda*

Sri Ramakrishna and Service of Humanity

DR. (MRS.) KRISHNA VERMA

A religious person is not one who sits in seclusion fixing his gaze at the tip of his nose. Religion finds its finale in looking at every creature as the Lord himself. One way of attaining this highest state is by serving humanity with the conviction that Jiva is Siva.

In this article, Dr. (Mrs.) Krishna Verma of Delhi quotes incidents from the lives of Sri Ramakrishna and Swami Vivekananda to illustrate the spiritual truth mentioned above and reminds us of our sacred goal which is the path too.

Whenever we think of Sri Ramakrishna, we may have a picture in our mind of a person absolutely withdrawn from the outside world—totally God-intoxicated (though very few of us have any real idea about it). His eyes are half-open as though not seeing anything external, and lips slightly parted as if in a faint smile, the cause of which is not obvious. He is a man whose body is in front of us but whose mind is away in a mysterious world unknown to us. It seems he does not belong to this earth, the pleasures and pains, the aspirations and anxieties of man do not touch him at all.

But is it really so? The Ramakrishna Mission founded on the teachings of Sri Ramakrishna is dedicated to the service of humanity. Wherever there is famine or flood, earthquake or epidemic, the sannyasins of the Ramakrishna Order are rushing to help the suffering people. From morning till night they may be seen in hospitals or dispensaries nursing the ailing and distributing medicines; or in schools and colleges teaching the people, from the three R's to higher things like sciences and philosophies. Vocational courses too are a part of their curriculum. Ignorance of any kind is the source of bondage. Ramakrishna Mission helps people to be literate, to know and understand the world, and stand on their own feet. Are these the job of a *sādhu?*

When Swami Vivekananda first introduced the service of humanity in the Ramakrishna Order, as an activity on equal footing with worship in the temple and scriptural study, some even among his brother disciples raised their eyebrows. In their mind the doubt arose: 'These are all Naren's ideas imported from the West,—our Master would not have approved of this waste of time and energy for work in this mundane world.' However, one sentence of Sri Ramakrishna, very significant, very rich in implications, could dispel all doubts about this, and it has since become the central point of the Ramakrishna-Vivekananda Movement. It is *'Śiva-jñāne, jīva sevā*—Service of Man knowing him as God.' This simple utterance has very deep philosophical meaning. It implies a perfect synthesis of spirituality and social service, religion and action, devotion and knowledge. The moment Swami Vivekananda heard Sri Ramakrishna utter it, he got a vision of his future course of action. Swami Saradananda in his famous biography of Sri Ramakrishna, *Sri Ramakrishna Lilaprasanga (Sri Ramakrishna, The Great Master),* describes the event beautifully:

> Sri Ramakrishna was explaining the essence of Vaishnava religion. In the course of the discussion he said, 'That doctrine teaches that one should always

be careful to observe three things: namely, a taste for God's name, kindness to all beings, and the service of the Vaishnavas.' No sooner had he uttered the words 'compassion for all beings' than he suddenly went into samadhi. Regaining partial normal consciousness, in a short time he continued,

> '...Talk of compassion for beings! Insignificant creatures that you are, how can you show compassion to beings? Who are you to show compassion? You wretch, who are you to bestow it? No, no; it is not compassion to Jivas but service to them as Siva.'

Narendranath (Swami Vivekananda), who heard the Master saying this at the end of his samadhi, coming out of the room said:

> Ah! what a wonderful light have I got today from the Master's words! In synthesizing the Vedantic knowledge, which was generally regarded as dry, austere and even cruel, with sweet devotion to the Lord, what a new mellowed means of experiencing the Truth has he revealed today! In order to attain the non-dual knowledge, one, we have been told so long, should have to renounce the world and the company of men altogether and retire to the forest and, mercilessly uproot and throw away love, devotion and other soft and tender emotions from the heart.
>
> Formerly when the sadhaka used to try to attain that knowledge in the old way, he used to regard the whole universe and each person in it as obstacles to the path of religion and, contracting, therefore, a hatred for them, he more often than not used to go astray. But from what the Master in Bhavasamadhi said today, it is gathered that the Vedanta of the forest can be brought to human habitation and that it can be applied in practice to the work-a-day world.
>
> Let man do every thing he is doing; there is no harm in that; it is sufficient for him, first, to be fully convinced that it is God that exists, manifested before him as the universe and all the beings in it....If he can thus look upon all the persons of the world as Siva, how can there be an occasion for him to regard himself as superior to them or cherish anger and hatred for them or an arrogant attitude to them, yes, or to be even kind to them?

Swamiji further pointed out:

> We get a great light on the path of devotion too from those words of the Master. Until he sees God in all beings, the sadhaka has not the remotest chance of realizing true transcendental devotion. If the devout sadhaka serves the Jiva as Siva or Narayana...he will see God in all, attain true devotion and have the aim of his life fulfilled in a short time. Those sadhakas who adopt the yoga of action or the royal road to the realization of God, will also get great light from those words. For, as embodied beings can never rest for a moment without doing work, it goes without saying that it is only the work of the service of Jivas as Siva that should be performed, and action done in that spirit will enable them to reach the goal sooner than otherwise. If the divine Lord ever grants me an opportunity, I will proclaim everywhere in the world this wonderful truth I have heard today.[1]

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1. Adapted from Swami Saradananda, *Sri Ramakrishna, The Great Master*, Tr. Swami Jagadananda (Madras: Sri Ramakrishna Math, Mylapore, 1984), p. 939.

The gist of the Advaita Vedanta is: *'Brahma satyam jagat mithyā, jīvo brahmaiva nāparaḥ*—Brahman is real, world is an illusion, the jīva is Brahman, not different (from Him).'[2] For ages the saints have preached the philosophy of Māyā; that the whole world is an illusion, Brahman is the ultimate reality; therefore, renounce the world and think of Brahman alone. Men, in search of this ultimate reality have left their hearths and homes, have severed all relations with the world and gone to the Himalayas to meditate in solitude and silence. But the latter part of the verse is equally important, equally true. Jīva and Brahman are one, non-different. But few paid attention to this part of the verse. Sri Ramakrishna's command, 'Serve man as God', reveals the significance of this part. Jñāna yoga tells us to know that everything is manifestation of Brahman; there is nothing *but* Brahman. If one looks on every man as Śiva, he has reached the goal.

Worshipping or serving the Divine Lord (call Him Parabrahman or Śiva, Viṣṇu, or Kṛṣṇa) is a part of Bhakti-yoga. It is action with devotion. Bhakti-yoga teaches one to love God and serve Him as a human being, very close, very dear to us, as father, mother, husband, or son, as master or friend. In temples and private shrines a whole-day activity goes on. What do we actually do in *pūjā* (worship)? We bathe the idol, put flowers and sandal paste on Him, so that He can enjoy the fragrance of these things. We offer good food to Him, fan Him if it is hot, cover Him with warm clothes if it is cold, put light and incense in the evening, and put Him to bed at night, again, awaken Him in the morning with music and the soft sound of bells. In a way, a devotee's objective here is to look after the comfort of his chosen deity. If this we can do to the living idols of God—humankind—try to look after their needs and comforts with the attitude of worship, not only God will be pleased with us, but the sufferings of the living will be so much less!

In the culmination of Jñāna-yoga and Bhakti-yoga, service of man as God takes root. Man becomes the living idol of God. By serving man we serve God. It brings in a complete change in our attitude. Sri Ramakrishna used to put so much emphasis on this attitude that after the *Sodaśī Pūjā*[3] when the Holy Mother asked the Master what she would do with all the things offered to her in the *pūjā*, Sri Ramakrishna asked her to give those things to her mother, but he also warned her—'Do not give thinking of her as a human being; think of her as the Divine Mother and then give.'[4]

If this we can do to the living idols of God—humankind—try to look after their needs and comforts with the attitude of worship, not only God will be pleased with us, but the sufferings of the living will be so much less.

The service to God and man has to be done with complete selflessness. As we all know, making some offering to God with some worldly objective in mind is not devotion but trade. In the same way, serving man with the objective of gaining fame or some other worldly benefit is not service in the highest spirit at all. Service becomes a religious path only when there is complete dispassion and selflessness.

We see that Sri Ramakrishna preferred *seva* (service) to the word charity. These two

2. Śrī Sankarācārya, *Brahmanāmāvalī Mālā*.

3. Lit., worship of the Divine Mother as a sixteen-year-old.

4. cf. Swami Gambhirananda, *Holy Mother, Sri Sarada Devi* (Madras: Sri Ramakrishna Math, Mylapore, 1955), p. 51.

words denote two different attitudes. Charity always implies a feeling of superiority on the part of the giver—'I am the giver, and you are the receiver', the helper and the helped. Sri Ramakrishna emphasized the doing of service as a spiritual discipline, as a help to spiritual unfoldment. We, insignificant creatures of this world, what charity can we do? Is the world so small that we will be able to help it? Everything of this world is created by God, He is looking after everything. It is He who can show mercy to His creation, and He is merciful. We ourselves are aspiring for His mercy, we cannot show mercy or do charity to any creature of His. Ours is only service, we can only serve His creation in a limited way, and thus help ourselves.

Whenever anybody told of doing something to benefit the world, Sri Ramakrishna reminded him of the vastness of the world.[5] Even if one opens hundreds of schools and thousands of hospitals, how insignificant it would be compared to the requirements of the world! So the pride of being a benefactor is to be given up altogether. Otherwise this minute help, instead of uplifting the soul, would become the cause of one's bondage and downfall. Pride creates distance, humility brings one closer. In service there is a tinge of self-dedication. Service makes one forget one's individuality. It brings in the feeling, 'Thou and thou alone, I am thy servant'; self-abnegation therefore comes spontaneously.

The service to humanity can be of different types depending upon the requirements. The first basic requirements of man are food, clothing and shelter. The fulfilment of these basic necessities keeps body and soul together. Sri Ramakrishna pointed out repeatedly that religion is not for empty stomachs. Food is so important in man's life that even wise men like Poet Kalidasa would lose their wit without food.[6] By food here we mean the basic material necessities for a minimum level of subsistence. Sri Ramakrishna's heart ached for those who were deprived of even this. Two instances of his life show how deeply he felt for them. In the language of Swami Shivananda:

> Once the Master accompanied Mathur Babu, a son-in-law of Rani Rasmani [owner of the Dakshineswar Temple], to his estate in the district of Nadia. It was time for tax collection, though the tenants were in dire straits because their crops had failed the previous two years. The sight of the starving and ragged villagers deeply pained Sri Ramakrishna. He sent for Mathur Babu and asked him to remit their taxes and give them a sumptuous feast and some clothes. Mathur Babu replied: 'Father, you do not know how much suffering there is in the world. But it will not help much to remit people's taxes.' 'You are merely Mother's steward, and these are Mother's tenants,' said Sri Ramakrishna. 'Let Mother's money be spent. They are suffering so much and won't you help them?' ...Mathur Babu had to accede to the Master's request.[7]

The second incident, again in the words of Swami Shivananda:

> ...It happened at Deoghar in Bihar. The Master was going on a pilgrimage with Mathur Babu and others. In those days the Master lived almost constantly in a high spiritual state. When they ar-

5. *Ibid.*, Bengali edition, p. 68. See also *Śrī Śrī Rāmakṛṣṇa Kathāmṛta* (Bengali), vol. 3, p. 15; vol. 5, pp. 201–02.

6. *Śrī Śrī Rāmakṛṣṇa Kathāmṛta*, vol. 1, p. 192.

7. Swami Chetanananda, *Ramakrishna As We Saw Him* (St. Louis: Vedanta Society of St. Louis, 1990), pp. 136–7.

rived at Deoghar, Sri Ramakrishna found the local people [Santhals, an aboriginal tribe] practically naked and extremely emaciated from starvation. Seeing their pitiful condition, he left the palanquin and asked Mathur Babu who they were. The people had been suffering from a terrible famine for the past two years, and the Master had never seen such misery before. When Mathur Babu explained everything to him, Sri Ramakrishna said that they must be given oil, bathed, clothed and fed well. Mathur Babu resisted, but Sri Ramakrishna said he would not leave—he would live with them until their misery was relieved. Mathur Babu had no choice but to do what he was told.[8]

The significance of the second incident is tremendous. Sri Ramakrishna, the God-intoxicated man was going to Varanasi, the place of Śiva, the most sacred place of the Hindus; and he, the greatest of the devotees was refusing to go there, just for a handful of unknown, hungry, poor people! This revealed the heart of Sri Ramakrishna, his advaita consciousness, his love for suffering humanity. If he could not remove their suffering, he would, at least share it with them. This was his religion! Visit to the sacred place was secondary here, not because he paid it less importance, but because he saw man as the living God. His word that he would not leave these poor people till their suffering was removed was not a mere threat to Mathur Babu. Whatever knowledge we have of his character,—his determination to carry out his decisions,—from that we can be sure that if Mathur Babu had not complied with his wishes, we would have seen Sri Ramakrishna living with these people only. Mathur Babu also knew it, and therefore arrangements were made immediately to give each one of these men food, clothes and some oil to cool their scorched bodies.

The above-mentioned two incidents also show how Sri Ramakrishna's religion mingled with humanism. In the first incident he reminded Mathur Babu that everything belonged to the Universal Mother, the Creator of this world. The Mother has appointed the rich to help the poor. If the rich did not help the poor they were failing in their duties. Who gives us wealth? Who gives us the power to earn money? If we think a little deeply we find everything comes from God. Otherwise why cannot we take with us a single pin when we die? These days we very often hear people say, 'I do not believe in religion, I am a humanist!'—as if religion or belief in God and humanism are opposed to each other.

From the Advaitic point of view, I should help my fellow beings because they and I are not different. The heart of a true advaita-Vedantin is so sensitive, so large that even if some suffering is taking place at some distant land, he feels the pain in himself.

In fact, there is no religion (in the true sense of the term) without humanism. There is no religion which does not preach love, sympathy and kindness. And humanism also, without religion, is fraught with danger, as any moment this humanism can degenerate into pride, selfishness and favouritism, as it has no solid rationale to support itself. The question—'why shall I be a humanist?' cannot be answered unless we bring in religion and ethics. Humanism can be well supported by the philosophy of the Advaita. From the Advaitic point of view, I should help my fellow beings because they and I are not different. The heart of a true advaita-Vedantin is so sensitive, so large that even if some suffering is taking place at

8. *Ibid.*

some distant land, he feels the pain in himself. This reminds one of the incident that Swami Vijnanananda once narrated of Swami Vivekananda:

> Swamiji, at Belur Math once got up from sleep at midnight and started pacing restlessly as if in great pain. When Swami Vijnanananda asked him what the matter was, Swamiji replied, 'Look Pesan (Swami Vijnanananda), I was fast asleep, but suddenly I felt as if I was pushed by something and I woke up. I think somewhere some natural calamity has taken place and many people are suffering.' Next day it came in the news that a volcanic eruption had occurred near Fiji and many people were killed, many had lost their homes and there was tremendous suffering.[9]

In the life of Sri Ramakrishna we find many instances of his identification with others. For example, one boatman beats another and lo and behold! Sri Ramakrishna bears the mark of the injury on his back! (This type of identification was found in Sri Ramakrishna's life, not only with human beings but also with subhuman creatures, with plants, trees, grass, etc.)[10] A total sharing of others' suffering came to him as a result of the realization of the oneness of the Self of all. It was not an indirect knowledge of others' pains, not a mere imagination of a sensitive mind, but something which was actually felt and suffered. In his advaitic consciousness there was complete absence of otherness (duality).

In the teachings of Sri Ramakrishna, the realization of oneness of all is the goal of life. The goal and its path, the end and the means, are same. What one wants to achieve, one can get only by practising that. To be established in the ideal, i.e., to realize the oneness of all, one has to practise it in thought and action. *Śiva jñāne jīva sevā*, service of man as God, is practising the philosophy of advaita in life.

> From highest Brahman to the yonder worm,
> And to the very minutest atom,
> Everywhere is the same God, the All-love;
> Friend, offer mind, soul, body, at their feet.
>
> These are His manifold forms before thee,
> Rejecting them, where seekest thou for God?
> Who loves all beings, without distinction,
> He indeed is worshipping best his God.[11]

9. Translated from *Smṛtir Āloy Swāmijī*, Ed. Swami Purnatmananda (Bengali).
10. Swami Saradananda, *The Great Master*, pp. 255–6.
11. *The Complete Works of Swami Vivekananda*, 'To a Friend' (Calcutta: Advaita Ashrama, 1989), vol. 4, p. 496.

If by giving up a lesser happiness one may behold a greater one, let the wise man give up the lesser happiness in consideration of the greater happiness.

—*Buddhism*, Dhammapada, 290

Mundaka-Upanishad

SWAMI SRIDHARANANDA

(Continued from the previous issue)

The Vedas

The revelations, the inner experiences of the *ṛṣis*, found spontaneous and unrestricted expression as the Vedas. These are full of wonder and joy; for, the sages had understood the mysteries of the universe. The *ṛṣis* became the floodgates for the poetic words that have come down to us as the *mantras*, or *ṛks*. In later times, when this mass of literature became too voluminous, Vyāsadeva codified it for proper maintenance for the future generations. The codified revelations took the form of the four Vedas, *Ṛk, Sāma, Yajur* and *Atharva*. These clearly show his understanding of and insight into the experiences and expressions of many thousands of *ṛṣis*. He was farsighted enough to include in each Veda both the ritualistic and the philosophical *mantras*.

So, from the study of each Veda we see the evolution of the *ṛṣis'* thoughts till they reached their culmination in Vedanta. From, the level of physical perception, for example, seeing the beautiful rising sun, to the disciplined spiritual experiences of the *ṛṣi* who saw the oneness of the universe—this is the range of experience in the Vedic literature. Sage Vyāsa so arranged these that all the four Vedas have almost similar subject matter: perceptual observation, conceptual knowledge, and intuitional experience. Thus the evolution of thought was clearly brought out in the arranged texts. He placed the whole gamut of experience from the grossest perception to the subtlest intuition in such a manner as to make clear the emergence of the grand idea of Oneness.[1]

The All-inclusive Vedas

In Vedic literature, we find that along with life-giving principles there are some subjects mentioned that we could say are not Aryan in culture: such subjects as *māraṇa, trāṭana, uccāṭana,* and *vaśīkaraṇa* (sorcery, witchcraft, magic, etc.) as are rooted in selfish interests and go counter to the principle of the spiritual oneness of the universe. This type of ideas, it must be admitted, have crossed the human mind naturally, though they may now transgress our modern ideas about what is acceptable, legitimate, ethical, moral, or conducive to the welfare of society. Such ideas often did find their way into practice in ancient societies, and became part of ancient culture. The *ṛṣis* saw certain basic principles in these practices, however, and concluded that they should not be rejected, rather they should be recorded, even though their existence in the society was in many ways execrable. The *ṛṣis* were intellectually honest to the backbone. So they did not hesitate to record whatever they thought worth learning.

No experience or knowledge is denied to the successors of the *ṛṣis*. People are hungry for knowledge. Those who are pure *(śuddha-sāttvika)* will strive to know Brahman, Īśvara, Bhagavān, while the worldly will try to know how to remain youthful for a hundred years, how to amass wealth, how to manipulate forces of nature to fulfil narrow selfish interests, and so on. Therefore in the Vedas are found not only the loftiest and

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1. *See note at the end of this article.—Ed.*

noblest ideas but also a historical record of some of the less than sublime facts of life and culture.[2]

Spiritual Inheritance

All the knowledge the early Aryans gathered was not written down, since instruments of writing were not available then. This mass of knowledge was retained in memory. The teacher recited, the student repeated, thus memorizing this knowledge. In turn he became a teacher in due course and passed knowledge on to the next generation in a *guru-śiṣya-parampara*, succession of gurus and disciples. But it was also understood that this procedure would lead to corruption of the ideas. My memory might fail, but my ego would not allow me to admit this, so I would create something to cover up loss of memory. Since chances of adulteration of the ideas were very great, the *ṛṣis* wanted to be absolutely sure that these ideas remained uncorrupted, and they succeeded in finding a way.[3]

Division of the Vedas

The Vedic literature was divided into two parts, viz. the *karma-kāṇḍa* and the *jñāna-kāṇḍa*. The *karma-kāṇḍa* is the pragmatic approach to life while the *jñāna-kāṇḍa* teaches the philosophical approach. The *karma-kāṇḍa* enjoined certain disciplines on people for regular performance, by which it is possible to purify oneself and become fit to understand the essence of the truth of one's existence. Through those disciplines it is possible to educate oneself to become competent to open the doors to greater truths that destroy the ignorance which keeps one confined to this body. The *karma-kāṇḍa* tells that our existence depends on Natural phenomena: so, do not do anything to disturb the divine principles of Nature, their rhythm, their symphony; act in such a way as to honour those principles, not violate them; then our existence will be safe and secure by their mercies. Thus we become beneficiaries of the universal Law. Therefore propitiate the *devas*, or the divine principles controlling rain, water, air, fire, sun, moon, stars, lightning, thunder, etc.

The *jñāna-kāṇḍa* concerns conceptual knowledge, and reveals the disciplines to train our understanding so that we can outgrow the limitations constituted by our physical body, thus opening for us further avenues of knowledge. Being the culmination of Vedic knowledge, it is also called Vedanta. The *jñāna-kāṇḍa* deals with such questions as, Who am I? Why am I here in human form? What is the purpose of my life? Is there any relationship between myself and the essence of the cosmos? How to establish that relation? and so on. It enables us to know the unknown, to experience that which is not yet experienced, and to realize the equation between 'I' and the universe, that the whole universe is nothing but myself; *aham brahmāsmi*, I am Brahman. Each Veda has therefore something of the gross and common. But gradually it rises to the Oneness of Vedanta philosophy.

The Upaniṣads

In the section of *jñāna-kāṇḍa* some portions are called the *upaniṣads*. These contain

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2. *cf. The Complete Works of Swami Vivekananda* (Calcutta: Advaita Ashrama, 1989), vol. 5, p. 454: ('The East and the West'). There Swamiji says, 'It is only the Vedic religion which considers ways and means and lays down rules for the fourfold attainment of man comprising Dharma, Artha, Kama, Moksha', to suit the temperaments of different people. He even criticized Buddha and Christ for preaching only the way of salvation.
3. The methods of *Ghanapāṭha* etc., in which the words and lines of the *mantras* are recited in different orders, gradually proceeding from one *mantra* to the next.

the wisdom of the Vedanta-part of the Vedic literature. The term *upaniṣad* was coined with a particular intention. The teachers gave it a connotation to highlight the utility of this knowledge for betterment of the self and society. The word *upaniṣad* contains the suggestion of closeness, nearness, and handing down of some secrets by a teacher to students devotedly seated near him. Grammatically, *upaniṣad* is a compound word, *upa+ni+sad+kvip*. *Upa* suggests *sāmīpya*, closeness, nearness, or acceptance. *Ni* implies *niḥśeṣena*, totality; and *sad*, the verbal root means *śithilī karaṇa*, loosening, totally destroying or evaporating without residue.

So, when one comes close to the teachings of Vedanta, his ignorance about his true original nature and the mysteries of the universe are totally removed without residue. The knowledge acquired by the study of these Upaniṣadic texts cuts to pieces our ignorance of certain truths of life which is the cause of all *aśānti*, of losing equanimity. In these texts, much importance has been given not to the duality of *sukha-duḥkha*, joy and sorrow, but to the removal of *aśānti*, disquiet. This is indicated in the Upaniṣadic *Śānti-pāṭha*, Peace-chant: Let there be peace everywhere, within me and beyond me; through this study of the Upaniṣads, may my ignorance about myself, about the whole universe, about everything, because of which I am not at peace with myself and my surroundings, be totally destroyed.

There are 108 Upaniṣads, of which some are thought to have got adulterated with interpolations having taken place. The concept of *nirguṇa-nirākāra-nirvikalpa* Brahman, the Reality devoid of all definitions, distinctions, and qualities, is beyond the understanding of most men. So there is also the concept of the *saguṇa-sākāra-savikalpa* Īśvara, the divinely qualified God who is not really different from the first aspect of Reality. But they are presented in that manner so that men with different capacities can comprehend that Reality. The *saguṇa* here, however, has no form, but He is infinite and merciful, and the Ruler of the whole universe. It is interesting to mention here that about 400 years ago there was an honest, determined effort to find the highest common factor between the concept of Upaniṣadic Divinity and that of Islamic Divinity, and Dara Sikoh under the guidance of Persian and Sanskrit scholars composed the *Allopaniṣad*, which was accepted by the Indian society as an Upaniṣad.

Of the 108 Upaniṣads, Ācārya Śaṅkara, who rehabilitated the lost wisdom of the Vedic culture, took up only ten Upaniṣads for his commentary to bring out their teachings. He wrote very exhaustive commentaries, as the Vedic Sanskrit was very different from modern Sanskrit. The *Muṇḍaka* (the commentary upon which was according to some his last), with the *Praśna* and *Māṇḍūkya Upaniṣads*, belong to the *Atharvaveda*. *Muṇḍaka* means the 'shaven head' and the instrument (razor) which does the shaving. This razor, being an Upaniṣad, 'shaves off' the dirt from one's thinking, and erases all darkness or ignorance from one's understanding.

(to be continued)

Note: The following is based on Swami Sarvananda's General Introduction to his translation of *Īśāvāsyopaniṣad* published by the Ramakrishna Math, Madras.—*Ed.*

Sāyaṇa, the great Vedic commentator, defines the Veda as follows: *Iṣṭaprāpty-aniṣṭa-parihārapāralaukikamupāyaṁ yo grantho vedayanti sa vedaḥ*, i.e., 'Veda is the book that tells us of the supernatural

methods by which to avoid sufferings and get the desired happiness.' According to the Hindu tradition, the knowledge of the Vedas first appeared in the mind of Brahmā before He created the cosmos. Then He began its creation in accordance with the Vedas. Subsequently Brahmā made the Vedas manifest in the minds of the great sages such as Marīci, Atri, Aṅgira, and others. Through these seers, again, the Vedas were disseminated among mankind. In course of time the Vedic lore got confused in the minds of the people, and to clarify it there appeared Kṛṣṇa Dwaipāyana, or Vyāsa, the greatest of all the sages India has ever produced. He cleared the original Veda from the accretions and classified it under four heads, viz., *Rk, Yajus, Sāma* and *Atharva*, according to the four kinds of *mantras*, to facilitate Vedic study. And to perpetuate the Vedic institutions, he taught his four disciples Pailāka, Vaiśaṁpāyana, Jaimini and Sumantu, the four Vedas—*Rk, Yajus, Sāma* and *Atharva*, respectively. These four *ṛṣis* taught the respective Vedas to their sons and disciples. As time rolled on, the descendants of these *ṛṣis* grew numerous and separated away into different branches. All of these branches, giving their own reading of each Veda, thus sprang up. These different readings of each Veda are styled its so many *śākhās*. According to the *Viṣṇu-Purāṇa*, the *Ṛg-Veda* had 21 *śākhās*, *Kṛṣṇa-Yajur-Veda* 94, *Śukla-Yajur-Veda* 15, *Sāma-Veda* 1,000, and *Atharva-Veda* 50 *śākhās*. At present 90 per cent of these *śākhās* are lost.

By the Vedas, we are to understand two sets of books—the *Saṁhitās* are the mantras to be chanted during the yajñas, or sacrificial rites. The *Ṛg-Saṁhitā* is to be chanted in praise of the gods by the *hotṛ* priest in the yajña, the *Sāma-Saṁhitā* is to be sung by the *udgātṛ* priest, and by the *Yajur-Saṁhitā* oblations are to be poured into the sacrificial fire and other works are to be done in connection with the sacrifice by the *adhvaryu* priest; the *Atharva-Veda* is to be utilized to acquire occult powers, and also by it the head priest, *brahmā*, has to superintend the works of the sacrifice.

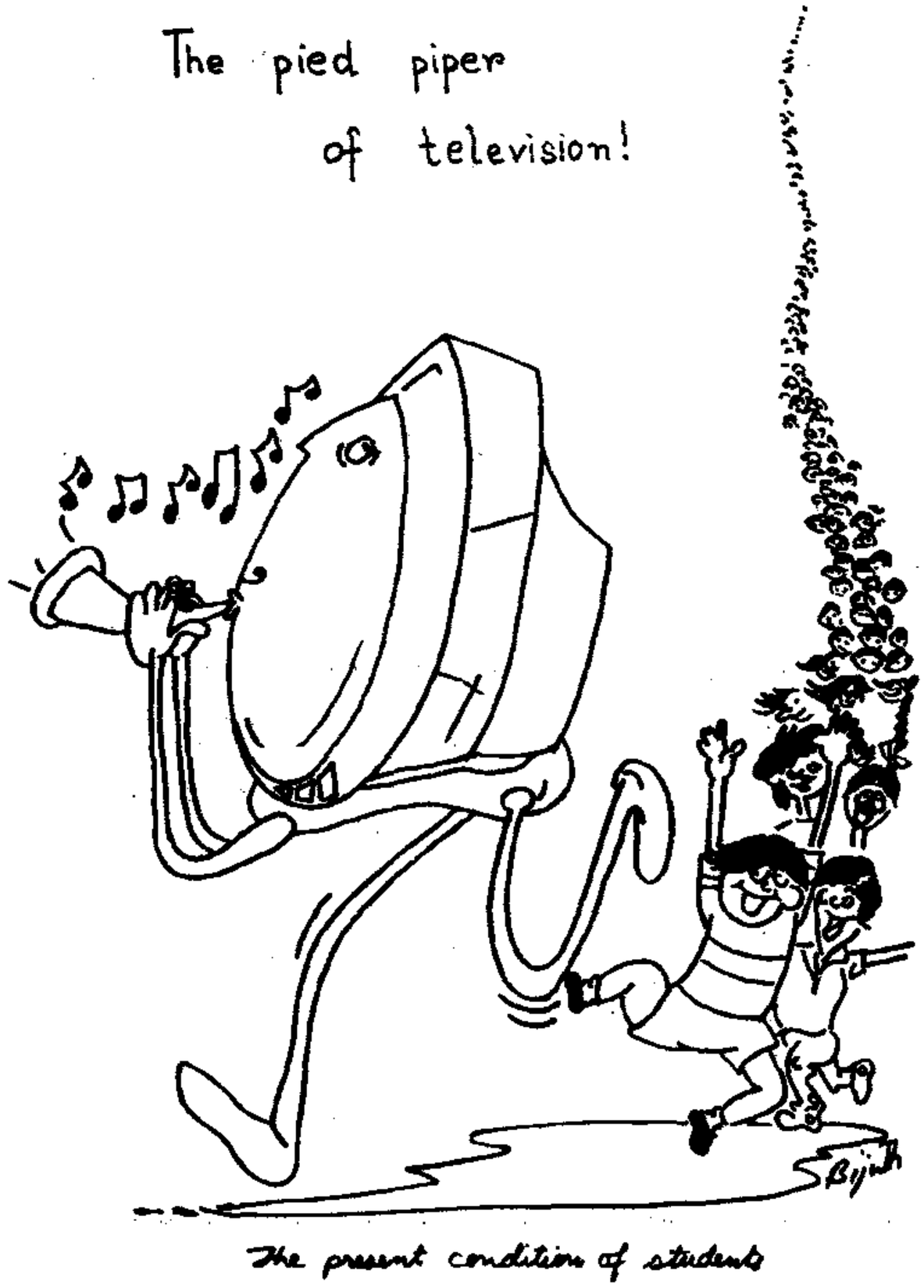
The other portion of the Vedic scripture is the *Brāhmaṇa*—each of the aforesaid *Saṁhitās* having its respective *Brāhmaṇa*. The *Brāhmaṇas* deal with the following eight subjects, viz., (1) the application of the *mantras* and the mode of performances of the different *yajñas;* (2) *Itihāsas* (history); (3) *Purāṇas* (old traditions); (4) *Kalpa* (rules of life); (5) *Gāthā* (poems); (6) *Nārāśaṁsī* (general life of man); (7) *Vyākhyāna* (explanations of the mantras); and (8) the *Upaniṣads*. Sometimes a part of the Brāhmaṇa is called *Āraṇyaka*, or the forest-book, and generally embodies the Upaniṣad or the philosophy of the Vedas. It is known as *Jñāna-kāṇḍa*, since it deals mainly with the knowledge of the Absolute and the means for the acquirement of the same.

So we see that each of the four Vedas has so many divisions and sub-divisions. For the general information the divisions and their names are given below:-

Saṁhitā	*Brāhmaṇa*	*Āraṇyaka*	*Upaniṣad*
(1) *Ṛg-Veda*	i) *Aitareya* ii) *Kauṣītakī* iii) *Paiṅgī* iv) *Śāṭyāyana*	i) *Aitareya* ii) *Kauṣītakī*	i) *Aitareya* ii) *Kauṣītakī*
(2) *Kṛṣṇa-Yajur-Veda*	i) *Taittirīya* ii) *Śāṭyāyanī* iii) *Maitrāyaṇī* iv) *Kaṭha*	*Taittirīya*	i) *Taittirīya* ii) *Kaṭha* iii) *Śvetāśvatara* iv) *Nārāyaṇa*

(3) *Śukla-Yajur-Veda*	*Śatapatha*	*Satapatha*	i) *Īśa* ii) *Bṛhadāraṇyaka* iii) *Jābāla*
(4) *Sāma-Veda*	i) *Sāma-Vidhana* ii) *Mantra* iii) *Ārṣeya* iv) *Vaṁśa* v) *Daivatādhyāya* vi) *Talavakāra* vii) *Tāṇḍava* viii) *Saṁhitopaniṣad Brāhmaṇa* ix) *Bhāllavi*		i) *Kena* ii) *Chāndogya*
(5) *Atharva-Veda*	*Gopatha Brālmana*		i) *Muṇḍaka* ii) *Māṇḍūkya* iii) *Praśna*

These forty-two books exhaust the entire Vedic scriptures. Of these almost all the *Upaniśads* and the *Āraṇyakas* form parts of the *Brālmaṇas* and, as such, they do not form separate books by themselves; yet, they are studied separately.



The present condition of students

Practical Vedanta

ON HOW TO BATHE

Disillusioned and frustrated by the wrangles of the world, a young man came to Philistine searching for Saint Martinez. 'Lord, I have come to serve you; grant me refuge', he begged.

'First you must go and cleanse yourself', said the Saint.

The youth went to bathe and cleanse himself.

Now the Saint called a charwoman and instructed her to sweep in such a manner that when the youth appeared, he would be covered with dirt and dust from her sweeping.

The char did as she was told. On finding himself covered with dust by the woman's energetic sweeping, the youth gave chase to her so he could give her a beating. However, she ran off swiftly.

The Saint again asked the youth to go and wash himself, and secretly instructed the char, this time to touch the youth when he emerged.

The youth returned from a second bath. The char meanwhile continued to sweep, and in the process touched him when he was passing by. Now the youth got very angry. Luckily he did not give her a beating, but he did curse her wholeheartedly.

This exercise was once more repeated. When the youth had bathed for a third time and emerged, the lady overturned a basketful of garbage and rubbish on his head.

Thoroughly shaken and awake, the youth remained calm. Bowing before her, he said, 'You are indeed my guru. With your grace I have today conquered my arrogance and anger. The two are now fully under my control.'

Just then he heard the immensely gladdening words of St. Martinez: 'Go now and bathe, for this time you will be fully cleansed and can remain with me.'

News & Reports

THE 86TH ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING OF THE RAMAKRISHNA MISSION

Synopsis of the Governing Body's Report for 1994–95

The 86th Annual General Meeting of the Ramakrishna Mission was held at Belur Math on Sunday the 31st December, 1995 at 3.30 p.m. Revered Swami Gahanananda, Vice President of the Ramakrishna Mission was the chairman of the proceedings. Revered President Maharaj was present for a very short time and gave a very brief benedictory address. A synopsis of the report of the Governing Body for 1994–95, placed before the members is given below. The report has stated the statistical data about the Ramakrishna Mission activities. By way of additional information it has given a brief outline of the activities of the Ramakrishna Math also.

CENTENARY CELEBRATIONS

The concluding phase of the Centenary Celebrations of Swami Vivekananda's Chicago Addresses was observed in India and in several other countries. The celebrations evoked a spontaneous and overwhelming response. The programme included parliaments of religions, public meetings, seminars, conventions, competitions for students, sporting events, etc. The Central Coordinating Committee organized a parliament of religions at Belur Math, a seminar at Netaji Indoor Stadium, Calcutta, and a youth conference and public meeting at Rabindra Sarovar Stadium, Calcutta, all of which were attended by thousands of people.

The year also happened to be the centenary of the Vedanta Society of New York, the first of such societies started in America by Swami Vivekananda. The Society celebrated the twin centennials in a fitting manner. It organized a convocation of global religions which was attended by about 1500 people, a four-act play *Arise! Awake!* on the life of Swami Vivekananda and a centennial concert by nearly 75 musicians highlighting events in Swamji's life.

In commemoration of the Centenary Celebrations of Swami Vivekananda's Chicago Addresses, the Ramakrishna Mission Sevashrama at Vrindaban declared that all in-patient and out-patient services (except for cabin patients) will be rendered completely free of charge.

ACTIVITIES

Relief and Rehabilitation: In the year under report, the *Ramakrishna Mission* undertook extensive relief and rehabilitation programmes involving an expenditure of Rs. 340.87 lakhs. Besides relief articles worth Rs. 5.52 lakhs were distributed. The following *primary relief* operations were conducted in different places in which 82,647 people were served:- *Distress Relief* in Rajasthan and West Bengal, *Drought Relief* in Gujarat, *Fire Relief* in Arunachal Pradesh and West Bengal, *Flood Relief* in Bihar, Gujarat, Orissa, and West Bengal, *Medical Relief* in Orissa and West Bengal, and, *Winter Relief* in West Bengal. Besides these, the centre at *Colombo* conducted *flood relief* in Batticaloa. *Rehabilitation Projects* were making rapid progress in the Latur District of *Maharashtra* (424 out of the targeted 646 earthquake-resistant houses, a school building and a community hall were completed), and in the districts of Jalpaiguri, Hooghly and South 24 Parganas (Sagar Island) of *West Bengal*.

During the same period, the Ramakrishna Math conducted *Flood Relief* in Gujarat, Orissa and Madras City, *Fire Relief*

in Orissa, *Fire and Winter Relief* in West Bengal, and *Drought, Distress and Plague Relief* works in Gujarat. In all, a sum of Rs. 10.44 lakhs was spent and 9630 families were served.

Welfare Activity: The *Mission* spent a sum of Rs. 85.03 lakhs by way of providing scholarships and stipends to a large number of students, medical aid to poor patients, and monetary help to aged and destitute men and women. This was in addition to the huge sums spent by our educational institutions for the benefit of poor students and by our hospitals and dispensaries for the treatment of poor patients.

Medical Services: The *Mission,* during the year under review, worked thorough its 9 hospitals with 1703 beds (59,975 in-patients and 19,99,367 out-patients), 67 out-patient dispensaries (20,92,823 cases) and 21 mobile dispensaries (6,97,454 cases), mostly in rural and tribal areas, spending a sum of about Rs. 11.90 crores.

Under the *Math* centres, there were 5 hospitals with 360 beds serving 13,271 in-patients and 1,87,398 out-patients, 25 dispensaries (6,60,264 cases) and 7 mobile dispensaries (1,29,492 cases).

The *Mission* and the *Math* centres conducted several free eye-camps, a hearing-aid camp, an ENT diagnostic camp and dental camps. The *Mission* conducted 2 old age homes, and 4 Nurses' Training Centres (Seva Pratishthan, Vrindaban, Itanagar and Lucknow). The *Math* conducted an old age home at Barisha and a Nurses' Training Centre at Tiruvanantapuram.

Educational Work: Through its educational institutions of various types the *Mission* aimed at imparting man-making and character-building education. True to the tradition, the academic results of the Mission's educational institutions were also brilliant. In 1994–95 the *Mission* had 5 degree colleges, 4 teachers' training colleges, 5 junior basic training institutes, 12 higher secondary schools, 28 secondary schools, 125 schools of different grades, 4 polytechnics, 7 junior technical and industrial schools, 84 hostels and students' homes, 5 orphanages, 2 institutes of agriculture, 1 school of languages, 1 computer centre, 1 blind boys' academy, 1 librarianship training centre, 4 rural development training institutes, and 6501 non-formal education centres, night schools and the like. The total number of students in all these institutions was 2,07,389 of whom 80,642 were girls. The *Mission* spent a sum of Rs. 34.72crores for this purpose.

Under the *Math* centres 7461 students were taught in 1 B.Ed. college, 1 Sanskrit college, 1 school of languages and in a total of 29 schools, students' homes and other educational institutions.

Spread of Spiritual and Cultural Ideas: This was accomplished through a large number of libraries and reading-rooms, lectures and seminars, films of religious and cultural value, regular classes, public celebrations, occasional exhibitions, etc. The publication departments of the *Math* and the *Mission* centres did appreciable work in this regard. The *Math* centres maintained temples, organized lectures, retreats and devotees' meets. Thousands of people were inspired to accept higher values of life by coming into contact with different *Math* and *Mission* centres.

Work in Rural and Tribal Areas: Rural and tribal welfare work has come to occupy a prominent place in the scheme of services rendered by the *Mission.* With its limited funds and workers, the *Mission* has been doing its utmost for serving the poor and backward people as also tribal people in different parts of the country. This is accomplished in three ways:

(a) through our centres located in rural

and tribal areas primarily set up for this purpose;
(b) through our urban centres, which have taken up development projects in rural and tribal areas, and,
(c) through our educational and medical institutions in urban areas where rural folk form a significant percentage of the beneficiaries.

The *Mission* spent a sum of about Rs. 4.69 crores specifically for rural and tribal development work, apart from the huge expenditure incurred by the educational and medical institutions located in rural and tribal areas.

The rural development training institutes at Narendrapur, Narainpur, Saradapitha (Belur) as also the Krishi Vigyan Kendra and Divyayan at Ranchi (Morabadi) trained youth for work in rural and tribal areas in modern methods of agriculture, dairy and poultry farming, etc. The centre at Ranchi (Morabadi) has taken up massive rural development project by way of extension and follow-up of the training programmes of Divyayan. The centre at Narendrapur is conducting numerous integrated rural development projects in several districts of West Bengal. The centres at Cherrapunjee, Shillong, Along, Narottam Nagar, Itanagar and Narainpur have won the love and esteem of the tribal people of the respective areas for their educational and medical work. There was further advancement in the extensive tribal welfare projects undertaken by the Narainpur centre in the Abujmarh area of Bastar district, Madhya Pradesh. The centre in Bombay continued its comprehensive rural development project at Sakwar with vocational training, medical service and other programmes.

The *Math* centres at Bangalore and Mysore undertook integrated rural development projects. *Math* centres of rural and tribal areas also conducted medical and educational service activities.

Under the *Pallimangal* activities of the Headquarters, a pilot project, initiated in 1980, continued in the villages in and around Kamarpukur and Jayrambati in West Bengal, conducting soil analysis, training for destitute and handicapped women in weaving and rolling of incense stick, training in spinning in mini jute mills, medical services including eye-camps, and training rural youth as health workers to conduct mass awareness camps as well as to motivate rural people to live a life of health, hygiene and sanitation. Low-cost houses were built for destitutes mostly belonging to Scheduled Castes and Scheduled Tribes.

The statistics relating to these institutions are included under 'Medical service' and 'Educational service'.

Foreign Work: The *Mission* centres in France, Switzerland, Mauritius, Singapore, Fiji and Sri Lanka carried on cultural work in addition to spiritual ministration. Some education work was also conducted by a few of them.

In the *Math* centres in Argentina, Canada, Japan, Netherlands, United Kingdom, Russia, and the United States of America our Swamis gave lectures at the centres and also in colleges, universities, etc. on invitation, conducted religious classes, observed religious festivals with special worship, organized seminars and held retreats. Some of them also brought out useful publications on philosophical subjects and spiritual teachings.

The 8 *Math* and 8 *Mission* centres in Bangladesh were engaged in conducting religious classes, discourses, daily worship and prayer, dispensaries, schools, students' homes, libraries and relief work such as distribution of food, clothing, etc.

Excluding the Headquarters at Belur Math, the *Mission* and the *Math* had 82 and 77 branches respectively, in India and abroad together. ❐

Celibacy Oath for Spread of Literacy

Banswra, Rajasthan: An educated youth, Mansingh Domar, surprised hundreds of villagers here by taking a pledge not to marry until the entire village turned literate.

Shocked by the youth's pledge of celibacy, the villagers vowed to root out illiteracy in this area bordering Gujarat, which is considered to be the most backward region in Rajasthan. ❐

TV Hurts Family Ties: Survey

New Delhi: Most television viewers feel the idiot box has a negative impact on society, promoting vulgarity and violence.

This was revealed by a survey on 'social impact of television,' commissioned by Doordarshan and conducted by the Centre for Media Studies in Delhi.

The study was carried out in different states including Andhra Pradesh, Assam, Maharashtra, Orissa and Uttar Pradesh. Metro cities, medium and small towns and rural areas were also covered.

The survey report says television is generally regarded as a double-edged weapon that has blurred the distinction between fiction and reality, especially for children, accentuated generation gap and generated tension between spouses.

Nearly 20 per cent of cable viewers and 14.1 per cent of Doordarshan viewers said they slept less. Around 34 per cent of cable and 30.4 per cent of Doordarshan viewers said they adjusted their sleeping time to suit TV programmes.

The survey reveals 26.2 per cent cable and 30.7 per cent Doordarshan viewers have reduced reading newspapers while 32.7 per cent cable and 46.9 per cent Doordarshan viewers reduced radio listening. A very high percentage, 66.9 for cable and 60.2 for Doordarshan, said they had cut down on going to cinema halls.

Most parents said television affected studies of children while 27.5 per cent cable and 21.4 per cent Doordarshan homes said their children had cut down on playing time.

However, only 10.3 per cent and 15.8 per cent Doordarshan households reported impact on care of old people or attention to children respectively.

About 69 per cent and 66.1 per cent of Doordarshan and cable viewers believed television increased vulgarity. In this respect, viewers found no difference between private channels and Doordarshan. Sixty-six per cent of Doordarshan and 65.4 per cent cable viewers also said violence had increased because of television.

Most viewers admitted they were not hooked to educational programmes. Interestingly, 70.6 per cent of Doordarshan and 61.8 per cent of cable viewers said they never saw news bulletins.

Although Doordarshan is unlikely to publicise the report in view of adverse findings, there is some good news for it also. It was applauded by 50.1 per cent of the viewers for increasing awareness on social issues while 78 per cent said their consumer awareness had gone up. Ninety-three per cent also said Doordarshan had promoted historical awareness. ❐

BOOKS RECEIVED

SHRIMAD BHAGAVATA (Kannada), vol. VI; publ. Bharata Darshana Mudranalaya, 163, Manjunath Road, 2nd Block, Thyagarajanagar, Bangalore, Karnataka, 560 028; 1995; Limp Rs. 24/-, Board Rs. 28/-.

The following two mss. are from C.V. Bhimsankaram, *Book Field Centre, Post Box No. 7228, Chembur, Bombay 400 071.*

SRI SHIVA-SAHASRA-NAMA-STOTRAM (Abridged); each name is interpreted in terms of *jñāna;* mss. pp. 230;

SRI LALITA-SAHASRA-NAMA-STOTRAM (Abridged); each name is interpreted in terms of *ānanda;* mss. pp. 178.